ARISTOPHANES

and the Carnival of Genres

Charles Platter

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Aristophanes and the Carnival of Genres

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and the Carnival of Genres

Charles Platter

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To Alice
ἄνευ ἧς κάρυα διέρριπτον ἄν

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Aristophanes and the Carnival of Genres

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Introduction

Bakhtin, Aristophanes, and the Carnival of Genres

> In the ancient period, early Attic Comedy and the entire realm of the serio-comical was subjected to a particularly powerful carnivalization.—Mikhail Bakhtin

> Our play's chief aim has been to take to bits great propositions, and their opposites, see how they work, and let them fight it out. . . . I've twisted and turned them every way, and can see no ending to our play.—Peter Weiss, *Marat/Sade*

It has long been recognized that the work of Mikhail Bakhtin offers useful insights for the study of Aristophanes.[1] Bakhtin refers directly to Aristophanes infrequently, but his study of Rabelais popularized the idea of "carnival consciousness," a mode of thought characterized by the temporary inversion of the categories of everyday life.[2] Beggars become kings, while kings and other figures of official culture lose their elevated status and, for the duration of the festival, are the objects of parody and other more direct forms of mockery. An intense spirit of egalitarianism prevails. The hierarchies and restraints of everyday life are temporarily abandoned in favor of the urges of the body: thus the excessive consumption of food and drink is celebrated, as well as its prodigious elimination. Sexuality, far from being a source of shame, is loudly trumpeted, and death has only relative significance as the stage in the cosmic cycle that precedes rebirth. Such carnival acts, according to Bakhtin, are driven by the folk culture of the common people and tolerated by official culture, which could suppress them only at great cost. The result is an overturning of official orthodoxies that is only tempo-

rary, but which, nevertheless, leaves traces of freedom. For Bakhtin, the novels of Rabelais, with their emphasis on grotesque bodily phenomena, drew deeply from this folk-culture tradition, despite the humanistic consciousness that permeates the works.[3]

Such a model of festive behavior has great potential to explain some curious features of Aristophanic comedy, including the special prominence of obscenity and personal abuse, its unrestrained criticism of public officials, and the way in which Aristophanes usurps the privileges of more serious types of speech and also claims the right to "teach" his audience about the realities of Athenian public life,[4] conjoining such pronouncements with words and actions of the most ridiculous sort.[5] Such features conspire to produce a style of comedy that is not at all homogeneous, nor one wedded to the principles of dramatic realism as they were later to develop. Taken individually, they seem anomalous and contribute to the feeling of unreality that can accompany our reaction to the kaleidoscopic movements of Aristophanic comedy. One can be led to wonder how such a comedy could have been legitimately popular. In light of the folk-culture model, however, much of the strangeness disappears: the prominence of obscenity temporarily makes public what is usually private and forbidden—or at least circumscribed. In addition, together with comedy's obsession with food, drink, and excretion, the presence of obscenity completes what Bakhtin calls the "carnival matrix": the cycle of birth, florescence, death, and rebirth. The unrestrained criticism of public officials (*onomasti komoidein*) parallels the Saturnalian reversals of hierarchy that characterize carnival culture, as does the sententiousness with which comic characters lecture the city on matters of policy and taste.[6] Even what appears to be comedy's overall aristocratic bias[7] becomes intelligible in carnival terms as the attempt by the polis to institutionalize carnival laughter and so limit the disruptive and destabilizing forms that carnival laughter could take. Thus Bakhtin's "carnival culture" is an important heuristic tool for the understanding of certain comic phenomena that clarifies much about the sociology of the genre.

But the fun doesn't stop there. Carnival's uniquely critical perspective on official culture is more than a temporary folk rebellion against the status quo. It is also a part of the living literary culture of a period. For Bakhtin, the adversarial relationship between carnival spirit and the world of everyday life—that agonistic orientation that allows carnival to undermine all that is serious—is paradigmatic for the interactions of literary genres, a subject that is central to almost all of his published work. Particularly prominent in these accounts are the "impure genres"

that forsake the stylistic homogeneity of epic or lyric poetry in favor of forms that incorporate a multiplicity of styles and reinterpret them on a higher generic level.

Parodic genres illustrate this phenomenon clearly but do not exhaust it. The intertextual experiments in Lucian's *Zeus Cross-Examined*, in which Zeus is compelled to explain his power vis-à-vis that of the Fates (on the basis of passages in the *Iliad*), and in the sequels to Plato's *Apology* and to the *Odyssey* that appear in the second part of his *True History* take the data of the epic tradition and the Platonic dialogue and incorporate them into new literary forms that then stand in ironic juxtaposition to the originals, undermining their ability to command our unmitigated admiration. The forces working to produce such multiform works are, in Bakhtin's view, very similar to those that bring about the inversions and transpositions of carnival culture, and he describes their effect on literature as "carnivalization." The carnivalized genres, of which more will be said later, produce far more lasting effects than the officially controlled time and space of carnival itself. Further, they have a long and under-analyzed history in Western literature, and it is my contention that Aristophanic comedy, with its wild stylistic fluctuations, benefits from being considered as a part of that tradition. These carnivalized aspects of Aristophanic comedy—for example, its juxtaposition of high poetic language with low ("Megarian") humor, as well as its critical recontextualization of tragedy and epic—are not addressed by traditional philological methods, which portray intertextual allusion as an historical phenomenon whose significance is exhausted as soon as its provenance is explained.

Indeed, the identification of source texts, and the requisitioning of appropriate cross-references, is only the first step in describing the textual interactions of Aristophanic comedy. This *merely* philological level does not go far enough, as Bakhtin implies: "It is much easier to study the *given* in what is created (for example, language, ready-made and general elements of world view, reflected phenomena of reality, and so forth) than to study what is *created*" (1986.120; emphasis in original). It is not sufficient to treat the Aristophanic "givens" as discrete phenomena, capable of explication outside of the comic context in which they appear. It is necessary instead to understand what happens when the genres "sampled" by Aristophanes are inserted into the new comic context. The resulting juxtaposition creates a dynamic relationship between the elements with effects that are both obvious and subtle. By attending to these interactions, we are better able to appreciate the original agonistic orientation of Aristophanes and perceive the interactions of

style in his comedies with what Bakhtin refers to as "*a sharpened dialogic relationship to the word*" (1981.352; emphasis in original).

To point to the limits of traditional philological techniques, without which the study of Aristophanes is, after all, impossible, is not to denigrate them in favor of "literary" appreciations of Aristophanic comedy. Rather, it is to deploy philology even more comprehensively as the only frame from within which a historically nuanced literary appreciation can emerge. To do so, however, philology must not be applied narrowly, as though the collection of linguistic data was an end in itself, but rather must be used to address the full range of stylistic interactions. This principle is not always observed. As Bakhtin complains: "Linguistics, stylistics, and the philosophy of language that were born and shaped by the current of centralizing tendencies in the life of language have ignored this dialogized heteroglossia, in which is embodied the centrifugal forces in the life of the language. For this reason they could make no provision for the dialogic nature of language, which was a struggle among sociolinguistic points of view."[8]

For ancient texts, it is particularly necessary to develop philological techniques for establishing contexts within which to evaluate evidence that is fragmentary. It is otherwise impossible to restore the dialogic relations embedded within such texts. Although these techniques are not an end in themselves, they constitute the instrument by which the language of Aristophanes—and of other ancient authors—loses its two-dimensionality and regains its dialogic complexity.

It is this intensely historicized aspect of Bakhtinian reading that most clearly distinguishes the approach that I have taken here from works more directly dependent on poststructuralist methodologies and, in particular, deconstruction, though it is also unsurprising that a methodology derived from Bakhtin's work would have numerous aspects in common with poststructuralist thought. Although Bakhtin's first appearance in English is with *Rabelais and His World* (1968), it is Julia Kristeva's work (1969, 1980) and Tzvetan Todorov's *The Dialogic Principle* (1984) that first place Bakhtin on the map of contemporary theoretical discourse. It is apparent to Kristeva and Todorov, among others, that Bakhtin is important for their own (poststructuralist) projects, and both acknowledge in his work a line leading through neo-Kantianism and Russian formalism (although it might also be said that Bakhtin establishes the conditions under which either continues to provide viable approaches to literature).[9]

Yet despite this filiation, and Bakhtin's fondness for abstract expression, he does not share the metaphysical orientation of deconstruction.

His primary interest lies instead with the conditions that structure individual linguistic events (utterances) that occur within uniquely meaningful contexts (see Barta et al. 2001.4–5). The intricacy of these events, both oral and textual, is difficult to overstate. Nevertheless, it is within this context that the homologies between Bakhtin's approaches to discourse analysis and to literary history are to be understood, for the appearance of stability that characterizes the materials of each is belied by complexities that cannot be comprehended by attention to their immediate contexts alone. That is to say, both discourse analysis and literary history have borders that are porous and therefore allow the infiltration of various historical forces. In actual conversations, of course, these forces are, for the most part, related to the personal histories of the participants: childhood, education, acquaintances, and so on. Participants, as a result, enter a conversation with complex and often conflicting expectations and forms of expression. For this reason, a transcript of many meaningful conversations will seem stilted and without depth.

Many of the same complexities and conflicts exist in the discourse of literary history, which can likewise be understood as a conversation, this time between texts and genres rather than individuals. The presence of these historical forces within texts creates a diachronic dimension to the utterance that cuts across the synchronic axis formed by its intratextual relations, that is, how the different parts of a text affect each other. Traditional philology excels at discovering both intertextual and intratextual connections in literary works, but is less consistently successful at putting them together—limited, it sometimes seems, by prior assumptions about the limits of expression for an author, an epoch, or a genre. Thus while our reading of literary history and the literature of an historical period will employ many, if not all, of the traditional techniques of philological study, the creation of a "Bakhtinian philology"[10] will additionally require a determined effort to read dialogically beyond the immediate context and into the intertextual dimension that is both the past and present of the text. Whereas traditional philology seeks to uncover the originary intent of the speaker and the meaning of the word, Bakhtinian philology focuses on the quality of the exchange—both intratextual and intertextual—where no single aspect of the dialogical situation is the sole determiner of meaning. As a result, in attempting to describe these phenomena, we encounter a dynamic ambivalence in the language (Bakhtin's word is "unfinalizability"[11]) that is complicated further by the presence of multiple audiences and interlocutors on the comic stage and in the theater.

At this level, admittedly, Bakhtinian ambivalence and the poststruc-

turalist infinite deferral of meaning can begin to look alike. The similarity is illusory. What is superior about Bakhtin's approach is his commitment to an historical and linguistic specificity continually evolving as a sequence of discrete moments over time. In so doing, he avoids the charges of anachronism that are often deployed by critics of poststructuralist thought while preserving the sense of open possibilities that we get from our experiences of literature and conversation. Indeed, as participants in linguistic events, we do not encounter deferral so much as presence in the form of multiple, shifting lines of possibility. Deconstruction does not analyze speech in this fashion, but Bakhtin's emphasis on the proliferation of meaning within the socially constructed world of language produces a model that is fraught with ambivalence without giving way fully to the play of language.

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. Let us return to Bakhtin's account of literary carnivalization, distinguishing it more carefully from the related phenomenon of carnival laughter and attempting to describe its effects on the interaction of genres. In addition, we must pay particular attention to two related strains of Bakhtin's thought: his understanding of the novel and his understanding of what he called Menippean satire and the other "serio-comic genres" of Greco-Roman antiquity, phenomena he saw as fundamentally connected. With that understanding, we can then return to the world of Aristophanes, along with its scholarly commentaries, literary subtexts, and historical backgrounds, to see how the Aristophanic intertext works to produce what might be termed a "carnival of genres," with diverse and unpredictable effects.

Carnivalization

During the 1930s and 1940s, Mikhail Bakhtin was assumed by many to be dead. He had been arrested soon after the publication of the first version of *Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics* for his participation in a variety of religious-philosophical groups and charged with corrupting the youth. He narrowly escaped being sent to a labor camp. In 1930, he was instead sentenced to five years of internal exile in Kazakhstan, where he worked as a bookkeeper. Later he was allowed to teach in the Department of Literature at the Mordovia Pedagogical Institute in Saransk. He remained there, except for the duration of the war, until he was "discovered" to be alive in the 1960s by a new generation of students; he was eventually allowed to return to Moscow where he stayed until his death in 1975.[12]

Although Bakhtin had dropped completely out of sight during this early period, he was not idle. In addition to his official duties, he wrote

the essays that appeared in English as *The Dialogic Imagination*, several works on the history of literature (the novel in particular) that have been lost, as well as the monograph that would later become *Rabelais and His World*.[13] This work was submitted to the Gorky Institute of World Literature in Moscow for a doctoral degree. Its acceptance was delayed for political reasons, partly due to Bakhtin's status as a political criminal and partly due to the reactionary turn in postwar Soviet literary criticism (the so-called Zhdanov period). Yet despite reservations that Bakhtin's research was insufficiently pro-Soviet, he was eventually awarded a degree in 1953 (Clark and Holquist 1984.324–35).

In *Rabelais and His World*, as well as in the essays that constitute *The Dialogic Imagination*, Bakhtin develops the idea of "carnival culture," which he understands both as a characteristic phenomenon of human culture and as a metaphor based in history and embodying a particular way of looking at the world that juxtaposes elements that are normally separate: "Carnival brings together, unifies, weds, and combines the sacred with the profane, the lofty with the low, the great with the insignificant, the wise with the stupid" (1984.123).

Particularly significant is the elevation of the profane, understood as "a whole system of carnivalistic debasings and bringings down to earth, carnivalistic obscenities linked with the reproductive power of the earth and the body, carnivalistic parodies on sacred texts and sayings, etc." (1984.123). Profanation makes carnival a negative force that undermines the separation between elements that are unequal in everyday life. Although part of its function is to elevate the lowly, this upheaval or reversal occurs not for its own sake but to discredit what was previously elevated. First of all, it directly undermines the sacred by conjoining it with the profane—specifically by drawing attention away from the soul to the body, the source of physical desire, fecundity, and decay. In this way, what is conventionally regarded as eternal and pure is desacralized by its forced cohabitation with what is temporary and unclean. Thus the status of official religious cult as the ordering principle of human life, and as the court of final appeal, is compromised when it is subject to carnival laughter in the form of parodies of its rituals and sacred texts. But carnival's attack against hierarchies does not stop there. The social order is likewise inverted, as are the divisions occasioned by wisdom, real or feigned, when the low are elevated at the expense of their betters, and those who know nothing are esteemed above the wise.[14]

This characterization of carnival laughter must be understood in at least two ways, although it is not always obvious which sense of the term predominates for Bakhtin. It is clear in some passages that he uses

"carnival" to refer to a historical folk-cultural phenomenon and that descriptions of it are anthropological in nature.[15] Indeed, it is a central premise of *Rabelais and His World* that the carnivalistic, folk-culture elements present in Rabelais were drawn directly from the traditions of medieval carnival and would have been so recognized by Rabelais's contemporaries. Further, an essential characteristic of carnival is its immediacy, its lack of insulating structures that protect the representatives of the status quo from the unseemly advances of common revelers. As Bakhtin puts it: "Carnival is a pageant without footlights" (1984.122). Instead, we find a suspension of "hierarchical structure and all the forms of terror, reverence, piety, and etiquette connected with it—that is, everything resulting from socio-hierarchical inequality or any other form of inequality among people . . . All distance between people is suspended and a special carnival category goes into effect: free and familiar contact among people" (1984.123). In passages like these, it seems clear that Bakhtin's primary understanding of carnival is as a sociological phenomenon, a literal event, and not as a metaphor for how some literary genres interact.

In many other places, however, Bakhtin seems to de-emphasize the anthropological element, and carnival assumes a metaphorical character, more specifically literary. To explain how carnival laughter is transformed into literature, Bakhtin posits a process of decay in the course of which authentic folk-culture elements are appropriated by literary genres and reinterpreted on a different plane.[16] In a passage that may owe more to the conditions of free speech in the Soviet Union under Stalin than to Bakhtin's considered opinion, he describes this process as a consequence of the move from the egalitarian tendencies of a pre-class society to the increasingly stratified world characterized by absolutely separate ideological spheres. Elsewhere, however, he sees the movement from an idealized folk tradition to the fallen world of literary culture in less historically determined terms: "It is precisely here, on a small scale—in the minor low genres, on the itinerant stage, in public squares on market day, in street songs and jokes—that devices were first worked out for constructing images of a language, devices for coupling discourse with the image of a particular kind of speaker" (1981.400).

Here carnivalization is not merely the result of specific sociological conditions but something that *always* happens within language as the inevitable result of a (public) critical discourse that problematizes the official categories of everyday life. In other words, carnivalization is a rejoinder to what had already been said and thus helps to develop further the dialogical substrate out of which new utterances will come. Indeed,

"coupling discourse with the image of a particular kind of speaker" is a skeleton description of parody. Here these parodic stirrings originate in the behavior of carnival goers toward the individuals and institutions that control their behavior in everyday life. Parody thus liberates by allowing the parodist to assert control over repressive speech of any sort. In this way, the etiology of carnival discourse is not to be found specifically in the emergence of class society whenever restrictions on personal freedom appear, as Bakhtin would have it in his anthropology, but in the conditions of language itself.

This notion of carnivalization as a systemic feature of discourse, therefore, de-emphasizes the significance of the unique festival (carnival) with its *temporary* relaxations of constraints. Instead, carnivalization allows us to see that Bakhtin's model of carnival is based on radically antinomian assumptions about the omnipresence of dialogical relationships, even in established genres (particularly parodic ones). Whenever a genre is allowed to claim for itself a superior (transcendent) status over others, whenever a discourse appears that treats other discourses as subordinate—there parody appears to contest the dominance of official speech, to undermine its ability to speak without qualification, and to restore to the *other*—not defined in terms of his or her social or economic class, still less of political allegiance, but simply in terms of his or her alterity—a voice of opposition, be it personal, political, or social.

Furthermore, the parodic word does not usurp the status of the official, for it is itself subject to the same relativizing force as the text it subverts. As Kristeva observes: "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*" (1980.66; emphasis in original). For Bakhtin, this process of absorption and the uncoupling of discourse from fixed positions has the effect of reorienting the primary conflict from the level of society to the level of language itself—or, better, resituating social interaction against a field of linguistic ambivalence. Bakhtin's ultimately agonistic vision of human society (the dramatic agon being a rudimentary type of dialogism, after all) will turn out to be an important tool for understanding the polytropic workings of Aristophanic comedy. But before coming to that point, I will trace Bakhtin's own account of carnivalization and literary dialogism, both as it develops in the seriocomic genres of Greco-Roman antiquity and as contrasted with the opposite mode of representation, which Bakhtin describes as monologic or, simply, "epic."[17]

Serio-Comic Literature

In justifying what will turn out to be a lengthy digression into historical poetics, Bakhtin remarks laconically: "We believe this question has broader significance for the theory and history of literary genres" (1984.106). The understatement here is palpable, for what Bakhtin has in mind is not a series of footnotes that qualify and continue discussion of traditional literary problems but rather a comprehensive view of literary history that comprises both its beginnings and its ends. The theory and history of literary genres that he holds up as beneficiaries of his historical analysis are not simple recastings of literary traditions but a whole new picture of literary form viewed from the teleological perspective of the (non-chronological) development of novelistic prose.

The privileged elements in this literary bildungsroman are the carnivalized genres, which are, in turn, derived from the carnival in its spontaneous, preliterate form and contain all the features that Bakhtin will attribute to the novel. Two aspects of carnival are particularly important. First is the atmosphere of spontaneity (as opposed to the relatively inflexible structure of everyday life), which Bakhtin characterizes as a pageant "without footlights," that is, one in which there is no formal division between performers and spectators.[18]

The second key feature of carnival is its temporary suspension of the laws and prohibitions that structure life outside carnival time. This, in turn, leads to the production of entirely new (and normally impossible) events, Saturnalian features like slaves who become kings and dignified institutions that become the object of parody are all possible within carnival time (Bakhtin 1984.124, 213).

The sum total of all of this is a carnival world that stands in ironic opposition to the world of everyday life—creating a deeply ambivalent image of order that gives way to inversion and freedom, which will, in turn, be recuperated into the traditional order of things.[19] This comic ambivalence weakens the spectator's commitment to the status quo, however, and so makes possible its re-evaluation. It is precisely this aspect of the carnivalized genres, their ability to create a situation where difference from the established order is conceivable, that allows them to be called serio-comic.[20] They are comic in their lack of fidelity to the standards of everyday life, serious in revealing those standards to be contingent, grounded in expediency, and open to change through the democratic "contest of public voices" (see Goldhill 1991, esp. 167–76).

It is clear, however, that the serio-comic is not an independent sub-

genre within the carnivalized genres but a defining characteristic of all carnivalized literature. What Bakhtin says about serio-comic literature, then, will also be applicable to carnivalized genres in general. It is useful, therefore, to examine his treatment of serio-comic literature, addressed most comprehensively in his account of Menippean satire, an amoebic form combining prose, poetry, laughter, and seriousness.[21] In Menippean satire we find the following:[22]

1. Comic elements emphasized.
2. A genre "liberated from the limitations of history and memoir" and characterized by "an *extraordinary freedom of plot and philosophical invention*" (emphasis in original).
3. "Use of fantastic and adventure" motifs to create "*extraordinary situations* for . . . the provoking and testing of a philosophical idea, a discourse, a truth, embodied in the image of the wise man, the seeker of this truth" (emphasis in original).
4. The combination of philosophical, symbolic, and religious aspects with "slum naturalism."
5. A preference for "naked, 'ultimate questions'" (over "academic" ones) "with an ethical and practical bias."
6. The appearance of a "three-planed construction" (Olympus-Earth-Hades) that changes the relationship between the individual and the powers of the universe.
7. A shift in perspective characterized by "*experimental fantasticality* . . . observation from some unusual point of view," from on high, for example, "which results in a radical change in the scale of the observed phenomenon of life" (emphasis in original).
8. "Moral-psychological experimentation: a representation of the unusual, abnormal moral and psychic states of man." Man "loses his finalized quality and ceases to mean only one thing."
9. The presence of "scandal scenes, eccentric behavior, inappropriate speeches and performances . . . violations of the generally accepted norms of behavior and etiquette, including manners of speech," a practice that "free[s] human behavior from the norms and motivations that predetermine it."
10. "Sharp contrasts and oxymoronic combinations: the virtuous hetaera, the true freedom of the wise man . . . moral downfalls and purifications, luxury and poverty, the noble bandit, and so forth."
11. "Elements of social utopia, which are incorporated in the form of dreams or journeys to unknown lands."

12. The presence of "inserted genres" presented "at various distances from the ultimate authorial position, varying degrees of parody."
13. "Multi-styled, multi-toned narration" that begins to produce "a new relationship to the world as the material of literature."
14. A concern with current topical issues, journalistic, highly evaluative of a wide variety of schools of thought.

Bakhtin's characteristics of Menippean satire can be organized into three categories: anti-hierarchical, perspective-shifting, and intertextual. The separation of the list members is largely heuristic, however, and Bakhtin himself emphasizes that the items are strongly interrelated (1984.119). Anti-hierarchical elements are clearly present throughout, but particularly in the prominence of comedy (item 1, above), which recalls Bakhtin's comment that "laughter demolishes fear and piety" (1981.23) and reverses the usual order of things by allowing the powerful to become figures of ridicule. The idea of distance, which I will discuss later in the context of epic and tragedy, is of crucial importance here. Also related to the increased importance of comedy, and indicative of the anti-hierarchical orientation of the genre, is the preference for oxymoronic combinations (10) that, through the (often comic) combination of opposites, undermine both components of the hapless dyad, but particularly the one that has the strongest pretensions to some kind of superiority.[23] Such juxtapositions also supply the conditions for the emergence of unusual situations and inappropriate behaviors (9), as the lack of separation between categories encourages interactions between parties whose relationships remain unscripted.

The elimination of hierarchy is also a removal of physical distance between individuals of different status, wealth, or occupation and their relocation into the same place on an egalitarian basis. Within the individual herself, it also implies the dissolution of spiritual hierarchies and a restoration of the body to a place of equal standing with the soul. As a result, many of the effects here are related to the physicality of the body and the multiple, opposed processes that comprise it: ingestion and excretion, growth and decay, birth and death. These are important carnival themes as well. Bakhtin discusses at length (1968.19) the priority given to bodily functions and comments on the positive valuation of the body in the carnivalistic tradition of grotesque realism, where bodily functions are part of the cyclical processes of change and rebirth.

Shifts in perspective are concomitant with the removal of hierarchical boundaries. But here I do not refer to carnival's interest in direct

contact and close physical proximity but instead to the aspects of Menippean satire, as described by Bakhtin, that produce a new perspective for viewing. In this context, he refers to the creation of "extraordinary situations for the provoking and testing of a philosophical idea" (3, 5, and 6). In other words, although it would seem that normal reality should be the proving ground for philosophical statements, in carnivalized literature, non-normal reality is preferred because it allows the construction of situations without regard to practical considerations or contingent details and thus allows the idea to be tested at full strength.

An additional effect of the perspective-shifting, unnatural situation is that it relativizes both the everyday phenomenon it parodies, by portraying it as secondary or defective, and the unnatural one, by drawing attention to the special circumstances that enable it. Thus each state of being produces a reciprocal deformation that is destructive of its rhetorical position.[24] For example, in Lucian's *Zeus Cross-Examined*, the opportunity for the narrator to question Zeus about the inner workings of fate is, by any estimation, an extraordinary situation.[25] Yet the evident poverty of Lucian the narrator's pedantic understanding—its entire substance, after all, is a few passages from the *Iliad*—makes him a ridiculous figure in contrast to Zeus. At the same time, of course, the positioning of Zeus as though he were the protesting interlocutor in a Socratic dialogue destroys his dignity and places him on the same level as Lucian (or below). In this way, then, this shift in perspective and the removal of hierarchies so characteristic of carnivalized literature produce extraordinary circumstances and comic effects that relativize the elements that are so incongruously brought together.

The intertextuality of the Menippean satire figures prominently in Bakhtin's catalogue. Everywhere there is novelty and change in the air, with new combinations of people, new spiritual parameters, new perspectives, and new voices. On the most literal level, we have works that are themselves multiform: poetry is juxtaposed with prose, adventure narrative with philosophical digression. When this happens, the generic status of these embedded items breaks down and they become "relics" to be understood only in terms of their new context.[26]

In addition, we see texts that are heavily dependent upon others. Lucian's *True History*, mentioned earlier, "sequalizes" a number of works, from Aristophanes' *Birds*, whose Nephelococcygia is seen and commented upon from afar, to the *Odyssey*, with which the intertextual relationship is most intense, offering extensive ironic comment on both the reform of Helen (temporary) and the fidelity of Odysseus (nonexistent).

In addition, intertextual borrowing is utterly destructive to the independent status of the transplanted text, which is co-opted by its new context. This effect is not simply a result of negative or satirical treatment, in which the transplanted text is perceived only indirectly and belittled by the satirist, it holds true for appreciations as well. Thus Dante's evident homage to Vergil in the *Inferno* does not change the fact that Vergil's text and his reputation are at the mercy of the author who "channels" him. In the same way, in *Acharnians*, Aeschylus is "lauded" as the favorite poet of the rustic Dikaiopolis and so diminished in the eyes of more discerning consumers. For both Vergil and Aeschylus, the experience of being objectified within the work of another results in co-optation, where the transplanted author becomes "other" than himself. This type of intertextuality, too, functions as a crucial tactic of the serio-comic and is in many ways the single most important aspect of carnivalized literature.

Dialogue, Epic, and Novel

The idea of dialogism is closely related to Bakhtin's understanding of carnivalized literature. Emerson and Morson identify it as one of three "global concepts"[27] in their attempt to organize the Bakhtinian corpus, a body of work with its own extraordinary loopholes and ambiguities.[28] Stated most broadly, dialogism is Bakhtin's coinage for the way that utterances[29] account for and creatively respond to each other.[30] Such utterances can belong to literal conversations or to texts that, to a greater or lesser degree, are grounded in other texts that precede them. This interaction is not simply a mechanical exchange of positions (dialectic) or a list with effects perceptible only at the level of the sequence. As Bakhtin says (1981.279): "Only the mythical Adam, who approached a virginal and as yet verbally unqualified world with the first word, could really have escaped from start to finish this dialogic inter-orientation with the alien word."[31] That is, our language is always borrowed or secondhand. It is thus *always already* dialogic at a certain level, no matter how carefully we attempt to insulate it from other types of discourse.[32] If this is so, then utterances will always be *already* in a dialogue with earlier utterances that formed the ground from which these latter were generated.

If all types of discourse are essentially dialogic, the rhetoric that enables them either enhances or minimizes dialogism's effects. Conversations are usually highly dialogic. Bakhtin comments on the sophisticated interactions that occur in typical conversations: "The word in liv-

ing conversation is directly, blatantly oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it, and structures itself in the answer's direction. Forming itself in an atmosphere of the already spoken, the word is at the same time determined by that which has not yet been said, but which is needed and in fact anticipated by the answering word."[33] Since the speaker is interested in her place in the conversation, her words do not have an absolute value. Only on receipt of a response can her word be thought of as complete.

Other types of discourse—the lecture and the scholarly monograph, for example—situate themselves rhetorically so as to suggest that they are self-sufficient and do not need to be supplemented by an "other." These forms are bound to be dialogic to the degree that they incorporate, or at least report, the opinions of others, agreeing, disagreeing, or supplementing. But it is highly unusual for this sort of author to "channel" the voice of another in such a way as to cede control of the speech in any significant way.

The same rhetorical attitudes are present in literary genres, the range of which Bakhtin attempts to capture in the juxtaposition of epic and novel. The epic worldview, which may be found in actual epics to a greater or lesser degree, is, above all, a worldview whose subject is removed from contemporary life. Bakhtin's metaphor for its status is genealogical: "The epic . . . has been from the beginning a poem about the past, and the authorial position immanent in the epic and constitutive for it . . . is the environment of a man speaking about a past that is to him inaccessible, the reverent point of view of a descendent" (1981.13).

The position of the epic narrator is constructed so as to impose a temporal barrier between the world of heroic action and the contemporary world of the epic's audience.[34] To begin with, epic action, like the plots of tragedies (which for Bakhtin are honorary epics), takes place in a past that has no direct linkage to the present. The devices that accomplish this task are numerous: the presence of the supernatural, the direct intervention of divinities, myths of distancing such as the Five Ages of Men in Hesiod[35] (as opposed to the myth of Prometheus as the bringer of fire and the source of relentless technological improvement[36]), the time of easy access between men and gods that provides the backdrop for Hesiod's account of the invention of sacrifice in the *Theogony* (535–60), and explicit statements contrasting the strength of heroes with that of their *epigonoi*, "posterity."

In addition to being temporally distanced, the epic world is also ontologically separate and unquestionably superior: "In the epic worldview

'beginning,' 'first,' 'founder,' 'ancestor,' 'that which occurred earlier,' and so forth, are not merely temporal categories, but *valorized* temporal categories, and valorized to an extreme degree" (Bakhtin 1981.15; emphasis in original. Cf. p. 342). In this way, the temporal priority of epic is not simply a formal marker of difference or a parallel evocation of the human condition. Instead, it indicates a distinct hierarchical relationship enforced by the notion that the old is identifiable with the good.[37] Epic's separation from the degenerate present, which it most usually does not deign to mention, thus allows it to function in isolation, separate from perspectives that might otherwise encourage the criticism of its foundational assumption of superiority.[38]

Finally, the separation is linguistic and made unbridgeable by the maintenance of diction and metrical schemata that emphasize the distance of epic and its allies from the contemporary world. So Homer's ubiquitous dactylic hexameter meter creates a monolithic structure that does not acknowledge alternate styles of representation.[39] Indeed, for Bakhtin, any metrical system produces a stylization that distances poetic speech from other types of expression: "*Rhythm by creating an unmediated involvement between every aspect of the accentual system of the whole* . . . destroys in embryo those social worlds of speech and of persons that are potentially embedded in the word: in any case, rhythm puts definite limits on them, does not let them unfold or materialize" (1981.298; emphasis in original).

While the speech of individuals and societies undergoes continuous dynamic development, metrical composition, by its very nature, acts to fossilize aspects of this free linguistic development and separate them from the world of living speech. This stratification is a feature of all poetry and is ultimately associated with poetry's vatic claims, a feature that harmonizes with Bakhtin's characterization of the epic mentality as perceiving itself as ontologically superior. To acknowledge this is not to criticize poetry for being inauthentic or elitist. It is simply to become aware of part of its generic makeup, a structuring principle with far-reaching implications. Indeed, for Bakhtin, the idea of an epic worldview, or the worldview of any genre, is, in a sense, redundant, since genre itself is understood to be a distinct way of viewing the world, one that renders possible certain forms of representation while excluding (or at least constraining) others.[40] Thus the metrical requirements of Homeric poetry enable it as a genre while, at the same time, limiting its expressiveness.[41]

This double bind that creates the linguistic separation between epic

and non-epic is not limited to rhythmical features alone. It also implicates the diction of the poem. In Homer, word choice is significantly influenced by the requirements of the dactylic hexameter meter. The meter itself is not independently valorized, however. It exists as a systematic feature of the poem whose influence is felt throughout, even as its ubiquity renders it virtually invisible.[42]

Moreover, in the case of Homer anyway, the meter is not a hurdle that the poet must negotiate in order to compose fluently. For the preliterate rhapsode, it is the means of composition itself. The formulae, which are the building blocks of composition—from the individual word to multi-line conventional descriptions such as we encounter in the epic simile or the descriptions of feasting and managing the sails of a ship—exist in the poet's repertoire as metrical units.

Finally, the various metrical exigencies require the existence of diverse formulae to allow the genre to achieve its maximum degree of expressiveness. This imperative puts impossible demands on the resources of any given dialect, however. Therefore, the language of Homer is polyglot by nature, mixing dialects to produce metrical formulae sufficiently diverse to allow for full coverage of the line on all the topics in a poet's repertoire. Accordingly, Homeric Greek was never a spoken language and, in the classical period, was already archaic: the vocabulary required occasional glosses to be comprehensible. But even in preliterate Greece, before the Homeric poems achieved their written form, the language belonged to everyone and to no one. Thus epic's distance from its fellow genres is both institutional and a factor of its temporal priority.

Many of the characteristics of epic are applicable to tragedy as well, and, with regard to the dialogic features that concern Bakhtin, these generic markers are near synonyms, a fact that will take on greater significance when we consider the phenomenon of tragic parody in Aristophanes. Certainly the temporal distance of tragedy, as measured by its focus on legendary history and myth, as well as the prominence given to myths of etiology, serve to locate it in a place far from contemporary reality.[43] Although a few plays reject this orientation, it is indisputable that the mythic past formed the background for the vast majority of tragedies.[44]

Linguistically, tragedy situates itself on a distanced plane. Like epic, it contains no prose, and, as such, always is distinguishable on a purely rhythmical basis from everyday speech. Unlike the monolithic meter of the epic, however, tragedy employs a variety of metrical forms for different (often formally so) dramatic purposes. On the surface, then, it

might be imagined that tragic meter is more dialogical than epic's dactylic hexameter. This may indeed be the case, but the effects of metrical differentiation are limited by the fact that, although the various tragic meters are distinct, they are not necessarily differentiated according to any kind of hierarchy that could be used to produce meaning. Even their local significances do not go beyond characterizations based on a specific functionality. Aristotle says that trochaic tetrameter is suited to dancing (*Poetics* 1459b37–60a1). Anapests are associated with marching and are common in the *parados* of the chorus. Characters who are excited frequently slip into dochmiacs. Thus the differentiation brought about by this sort of metrical variation does not serve to introduce clearly a voice of otherness into the tragic metrical schema.

Iambic trimeter is a better candidate for providing a dialogizing element in tragedy. Aristotle also says that iambic trimeter is the meter closest to "natural" speech (*Poetics* 1449a25–29). Thus there is some basis for saying that rhythmically it exerts a slight contemporizing effect on its immediate surroundings, relativizing the meters that are further removed from typical speech. Yet even this aspect of tragic diction is rather muted, especially when compared with what we find in Aristophanes. Tragic trimeters are extremely regular in their metrical patterns, and tragedians only infrequently avail themselves of the opportunity to replace a long syllable with two short ones (resolution). Such fidelity imposes direct constraints upon the "natural" vocabulary of the lines. Many common words like ἔλαβον, "I/they seized," or πόλεμος, "war," are not at home in this type of meter because their tribrach shape (three consecutive short syllables) prevents them from appearing in a line structured by the alternation of longs and shorts.[45] Comedy, which appears to try actively to incorporate everyday speech styles into its discourse, solves this problem by relaxing metrical constraints on resolution. Thus strings of short syllables can easily be accommodated to the comic iambic trimeter line. Resolution is possible in tragic trimeters as well, but its frequency there, relative to that in comedy, indicates quite clearly that its use is constrained, and while it is arbitrary to attribute specific intentions to stylistic effects, it seems nevertheless clear that this characteristic of the tragic trimeter has definite implications for any appearance of colloquial speech, the absence of which will result in a greater sense of linguistic separation, despite Aristotle's opinion about the "naturalness" of the meter.[46]

Both epic and tragedy, as I have indicated, are characterized by what Bakhtin understands to be an "epic worldview." I should empha-

size again, however, that such labels are relative in their application, and that dialogism permeates even the most resistant genres. Bakhtin specifically calls tragedy "polyglot" (1981.12), and elsewhere extends the idea to other genres as well: "In the Greek literary language we encounter behind each separate genre the consolidation of a particular dialect. Behind these gross facts a complex trial-at-arms is concealed, a struggle between languages and dialects, between hybridizations, purifications, shifts and renovations, the long and twisted path of struggle for the unity of a literary language and for the unity of its system of genres" (1981.66). The picture of language interaction thus conveyed is one of a fundamental dialogical struggle between dialects and genres of written literature, of the oral artistic culture that both preceded and was largely contemporaneous with them, and of the oral "speech genres," the network of professional and social vocabularies that form the background for both.[47] This struggle is absolutely historical, and there is no place for creation ex nihilo. Thus the existence of tragedy allows us to infer, if not document, the existence of the linguistic battles that made it possible, and that led to the incorporation of lyric meters, trimeter and tetrameter, as well as the literary Doric that played an important role in opposition to Attic.

Yet as Bakhtin's use of the term "consolidation" suggests, if a genre like tragedy is not truly monologic, it is nevertheless possible for it to be styled rhetorically in ways that de-emphasize the effects of dialogism, for example, through its use of mythological plots drawn from the epic worldview, its linguistic separation (whatever its origin and development), and the sense of ontological superiority perceivable in the evident appreciation of tragic dignity.[48]

Comedy, as it turns out, is particularly adept at singling out these rhetorical stylizations as targets for carnivalization. The representation of Euripidean tragedy in comedy, for example, where Euripides is mocked as a creator of beggars, is particularly telling in this respect.[49] The charge implies Euripides' preference for characters whose appearance compromises tragic dignity, even when, as in the case of *Telephus*, the beggar turns out to be a king.[50] Such a character problematizes tragic dignity in other ways as well. He is impudent and, in the way of Thersites, does not hesitate to defend himself against the designs of his apparent superiors. Further, the beggar's willingness to argue is itself an active assertion of equality that makes him a comic figure who has overreached himself. Such comic use of tragic elements presumes that an important part of tragedy's self-presentation is its implicit assertion of *semnotes*

("solemnity") and, moreover, that despite important internal, dialogic relations, audiences typically perceived tragedy as speaking a language that was elevated and hierarchically superior. Such evidence suggests strongly that, although tragedy poses different problems of interpretation than Homeric epic, both share a sense that the characters of their representations are superior to contemporary humans (cf. *Poetics* 1448a), and both employ meters and special poetic dictions that help to create an environment that reinforces that sense of separation.

Bakhtin's understanding of novelistic consciousness is in explicit contrast with his understanding of epic. Like epic, however, the "novel" possesses a composite structure, as it is represented not only by actual novels but also by the numerous genres that helped to develop its particular way of looking at the world. Bakhtin's argument thus takes two forms. On the one hand, it is an argument about literary history that locates the roots of the modern novel in folk consciousness and its derivatives, the "carnivalized" genres of Greco-Roman antiquity. On the other hand, as discussed above, for Bakhtin, the novel is always new whenever it arises because it partakes of a critical spirit that is openly hostile to what has gone before. In this sense, a discussion of the novel is not so much a chronological hypothesis about history as it is a map of literary consciousness that shapes the strategies of representation and conditions their expressive possibilities (cf. Bakhtin 1981.7–8). This double vision is central to Bakhtin's understanding of the novel, and, for this reason, he passes with ease from discussions of the novel per se to discussions of the serio-comic genres of antiquity that, for him, were the carriers of carnival ambivalence into the period that saw the rise of the novel as an independent genre.

Bakhtin portrays the novel as rejecting epic distance and the hierarchical relationships that typify the absolute past of "the fathers."[51] In epic (and tragedy), he writes, "the dead are loved in a different way. They are removed from the sphere of contact, one can and indeed must speak of them in a different style" (1981.20). This style is the voice of epic and tragedy, archaic and reverential about the past, awed by the world of the dead. The novel, by contrast, is contemporary and on the same stylistic plane as the world it represents. As an example, Bakhtin cites Dostoevsky, who regularly brings together "unmerged consciousnesses" who are not subject to a narrator who filters their experiences through his own vision. Instead, they exist alongside one another, interacting dynamically, producing a phenomenon that Bakhtin regularly likens to musical polyphony.[52] This can occur as the interaction of separate enti-

ties or as a characteristic of introspection: "In every voice [Dostoevsky] could hear two contending voices, in every expression a crack and the readiness to go over immediately to another contradictory expression; in every gesture he detected confidence and lack of confidence simultaneously" (1984.30).

This quality of sensitivity allowed Dostoevsky to produce novels that preserved a high degree of indeterminacy that did not resolve itself into reassuring pieties. The idea of freedom is central and creates an aesthetic impression of realistic contingency: "Nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future" (1984.166).

To speak of freedom, however, is not to preclude conflict, and, for Bakhtin, novelistic consciousness is characterized, over and beyond any other way, by the idea of struggle. In another description of Dostoevsky's innovation, he comments: "He brought together ideas and worldviews, which in real life were absolutely estranged and deaf to one another, and forced them to quarrel. He extended, as it were, these distantly separated ideas by means of a dotted line, to the point of their dialogic intersection."[53] The primary means of interaction, then, is agonistic and polemical. This is a dramatic characterization and one with substantial explanatory potential. Anne Carson refers (1990) to early twentieth-century anthropological literature for the opinion that even a touch is "a modified blow," a useful observation for the evaluation of literature, where competitive overtones are only more or less apparent in the discursive agons of intertextual relations.

This type of aggressive interaction is not associated with Dostoevsky alone, but is a characteristic of novelistic genres as early as classical antiquity, genres that invert the features of tragedy and epic in a number of significant ways: "The 'absolute past' of gods, demigods, and heroes is here, in parodies and even more so in travesties . . . brought low, represented on a plane equal with contemporary life."[54] In this way, it is possible to see that the great historical distance that characterizes the plots of epic and tragic poetry is reduced or removed altogether in the carnivalizing discourses. The disappearance of historical separation is accompanied by the elimination of hierarchy. Much of this is due to the effect of laughter, which "demolishes fear and piety before an object."[55]

Even more striking is the use of language in these genres, which abandons the stylistic monotony of the high genres in favor of a more open approach. As in the novel, Bakhtin notes (1981.261): "The inves-

tigator is confronted with several heterogeneous stylistic unities, often located on different linguistic levels and subject to different stylistic controls." More specifically, he says: "Characteristic of these genres is a multi-toned narration, the mixing of high and low, serious and comic; they make wide use of inserted genres—letters, found manuscripts, retold dialogues, parodies of the high genres, parodically reinterpreted citations" (1984.108). Thus we see at work in the serio-comic genres of antiquity a consciousness that resembles that of the novel in important respects: generally, in their anti-epic orientation and, specifically, in their abolition of epic distance and modes of representation.

What is at stake, even more than the appearance of individual stylistic features, is a whole new conception of the human being. No longer simply constrained by the past, with the loosening of the injunction not to go "beyond the pillars of Heracles," which was an appeal to unvarying nature, "man ceased to coincide with himself, and consequently men ceased to be exhausted entirely by the plots that contain them" (Bakhtin 1981.35). This expansion of human possibilities against the backdrop of epic limitation is itself part of a larger movement of forces within European culture: "[The novel] reflects, in its stylistic structure, the struggle between two tendencies in the languages of European peoples: one a centralizing, (unifying) tendency, the other a decentralizing tendency."[56]

Bakhtin elsewhere describes the relationship between these tendencies in terms borrowed from classical physics. "Centripetal" force, like the gravity that keeps bodies in stable orbits, becomes, in Bakhtin's lexicon, the centralizing impulse behind the monologism of epic consciousness, while the orientation of the novel and its congeners is characterized as "centrifugal," preferring a logic of polysemy in contrast to the stillness of the monologic center.[57] Yet these novelistic tendencies do not stand completely in opposition to monologism, in the sense that their presence implicitly contests the authority of the centralizing forces that attempt to ignore them. Indeed, as Emerson and Morson note, to call them centrifugal (or decentralizing) "may be misleading, suggesting as it does lines of force radiating from a center in an organized way."[58] Bakhtin himself says as much in his discussion of the rival systems of languages that comprise the novel, which he compares to a system of intersecting planes.[59] Thus in Bakhtin's model of the novel and its precursors, the serio-comic genres of antiquity, we have the basis for a system of discourses of infinite complexity and ceaseless change. With these concepts in mind, we can now shift the discussion to Athenian Old Comedy and attempt to show how its history and institutional structure contributed

to the development of a complex intertextuality—traceable most clearly in Aristophanes—that resounds deeply with Bakhtin's characterization of carnivalized literature and the novel.

The Laughter of Dionysus

To summarize: we began with a catalogue of carnival elements in Aristophanic comedy. We have now broadened the scope of the discussion, however, to include within our account of the effects of carnival not only the aspects of comedy that are arguably derived from preliterary folk practices but also their literary-linguistic equivalent, carnivalization. Carnivalization, in turn, is another way of describing the consciousness of the novel that, in contrast to the stylistic homogeneity of what Bakhtin calls "epic," cannibalizes other genres to create a type of literature that bills itself as capable of passing judgment on the genres it recycles.

But carnivalization and the particular modes of novelistic consciousness are themselves highly context driven, with unique local effects determined by historical contingencies, including accidents of genre. Thus before turning to the particular effects of carnivalization on the works of Aristophanes, we will need to look briefly at the institutional structure of fifth-century Greek comedy, the ideologies it reflects, and the characteristics of the literary genre that that structure produced.

Although comedy seems likely to have been a part of Greek life long before the beginning of written records, it was not until 486 B.C.E., less than a generation after the changes that would lead to Athenian democracy, that comic performances were first incorporated into the City Dionysia, an annual festival dedicated to the god Dionysus. Its earliest patronage by the city, therefore, occurred significantly later than that of tragedy, which received official sponsorship as early as 534 B.C.E. Sometime not long after 440 B.C.E., comic competitions were introduced into the ritual program of the Lenaia, also a festival of Dionysus, but occurring earlier in the year before the start of the sailing season, the better weather of which allowed for travel and, consequently, the arrival of non-Athenians. As a result, comic poets could at least affect to presume audiences with significantly different makeups.[60]

The set number of comedies at each festival was apparently five.[61] At some time prior to the festival, writers would apply to the official in charge and ask for a chorus (*Knights* 513). It is not known how the participants in the dramatic contests were chosen, but there were sufficient writers of Old Comedy to make necessary regular procedures

for choosing among the applicants. The poets who were victorious in this initial competition were called *chorodidaskaloi* ("chorus teachers") or *komoidodidaskaloi* ("comedy teachers"). They were not only responsible for writing a script but also for training the chorus and actors, devising costumes, and determining what special props or scenery might be required.[62]

An important influence on the content of Old Comedy was the competitive nature of the festival itself. The desire to win, and the prestige that accompanied winning, was an important motive that helped to direct the transgressive urges that seem to have been at comedy's heart and to account for the antinomian quality of its action and language. In virtually every aspect of the dramatic festival, competition was present, and the preliminary competition that pitted prospective dramatists against each other in attempting to secure a place on the program was only the beginning.[63] Within the festival itself, as part of the festivities leading up to performances at the City Dionysia, each *chorodidaskalos* participated in the *proagon*, at which he led his chorus on stage and probably summarized the plot of the play. Since the term *proagon* means "pre-contest," it is clear that even at this gathering, where judging was not yet an issue, the competitive aspects of the performances were already alluded to explicitly. Later, when the plays were performed, these same aspects of the performance sometimes became part of the text of the comedy itself. Expressions of praise or blame for the judges are common, and plays commonly end with a call for the audience to show its approval. In what appears to be one of his many gestures of generic self-awareness, Aristophanes wrote a play entitled *Proagon*, and although we know little about the plot, the title itself makes clear that it must have emphasized the competitive aspects of play production at Athens.

Even without the text of *Proagon*, the extant plays of Aristophanes clearly show his preoccupation with the competitive circumstances of play production. He makes frequent reference to this situation, whether he is belittling his rivals, attempting to flatter the judges, or calling for the audience's approval. *Knights*, for example, contains a lengthy discussion of the *former* merits of his rivals designed to emphasize how utterly unpopular and passé they have subsequently become (514–40). *Clouds* and *Wasps* both feature lengthy complaints about the vulgarity of Aristophanes' rivals, which contrasts so poorly with his own "Herculean" efforts to produce good comedy, and both complain about the quality of the judging that relegated the original production of *Clouds* to a third-place finish.[64]

In such a climate of heightened competition, it is no surprise that the judging of both comedy and tragedy received special scrutiny in order to avoid the appearance of fraud. The evidence is neither plentiful nor especially coherent, but the general procedures seem clear enough. Before the festival, potential judges were proposed by the ten tribes and confirmed by the council (*boule*). The judges, apparently one from each tribe, were chosen by lot immediately prior to the performance, whereupon those selected left their seats and moved to the special places reserved for them in the front. Voting may have been preceded by an additional sortition to choose which votes were to be counted.[65]

It is unlikely that this elaborate machinery for judging was inherited from the early period of tragedy, which was institutionalized in 534 B.C.E. under the tyranny of Peisistratus. Indeed, the fact that potential judges were supplied by the tribes points to a late sixth- or early fifth-century date, some time following the reorganization of the tribes under Cleisthenes after the fall of the tyranny. Much of the festival's competitive nature, then, seems likely to have evolved as a feature of democratic openness and concern for equal access to the law (*isonomia*), both obviously relevant to the issue of judging. The degree of concern expressed for fairness here, as well as the administrative architecture and civic sponsorship that helped to produce drama, all testify to the fact that comedy is not simply an independent literary phenomenon but a product of a democratic polis with assumptions about the importance of openness in public life and the equality of all before the law.

This predisposition is reflected in the rhetoric of Old Comedy itself. In *Acharnians*, it is clearly visible in the characterization of Aristophanes as a teacher of the demos from whom the Athenians have learned not to be deceived by the flattery of foreigners (633–35).[66] Also commenting on public life, the chorus of *Frogs* offers specific advice to restore civic rights to disenfranchised exiles and confer citizenship upon anyone who joins the navy and fights for Athens (686–705). While many pieces of advice offered in comedy are frivolous, it is nevertheless true that the comic poets always reserved the right to invoke their institutional credentials at moments of their own choosing.[67] In so doing, they guaranteed that this quality of civic life would be reflected, if ludicrously, in comedy.

To this degree, then, the agons of comedy reproduced the divisions of the city itself. Civic sponsorship, on the other hand, might suggest that these conflicts should be resolved with a view toward the city's narrower interests. Yet upon the examination of comedy, we find that this is not true either. Aristophanes, anyway, not only gives a hearing to un-

orthodox viewpoints, he regularly allows those viewpoints to prevail, whether his characters propose to make peace with Sparta (*Acharnians*, *Peace*), entrust the business of the assembly to women (*Ecclesiazusae*), or abandon Athens altogether (*Birds*). Yet this tendency to transgress the norms of Athenian society neither implies a *rejection* of Athenian democracy, nor should we confuse such openness with progressive, and in so many ways private, liberalism as it is practiced in western Europe and North America today but which is altogether foreign to the Athenian assumption that such expressions of antinomianism are particularly important for their *public* dimensions. Simon Goldhill emphasizes that it is just this public component of freedom that allows comedy to be understood within the context of a democratic ideology (1991.174): "Such an institution could exist only in a democracy and in Athens in particular with its values of freedom to speak out, equality before the law, and, above all, the need to place matters of common concern before the city for public discussion, disagreement, and decision—that is, to place things ἐν μέσῳ or ἐς μέσον, *in the public domain to be contested*" (emphasis in original).

Thus civic sponsorship need not imply that comic writers felt required to uphold the party line when it came to choosing their approaches. Yet by the same logic, their efforts need not have been radical or forward thinking either, at least in the short run. Indeed, their inclusion in the civic festival already marks them as insiders, if only marginal ones.

Goldhill's emphasis on public deliberation is illuminating for the understanding of Aristophanic comedy. The fact that Aristophanes styles much of his drama as instruction for his fellow citizens, while creating characters who urge them to distrust the rhetoric and the motives of their public officials, duplicates the style of discourse in the assembly where speakers vied for prominence by contesting both the words and the actions of their fellow citizens. This discursive context, which is based upon the supposed equality of all participants, sheds light on the argument raised by Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians* (502–08) that justifies his "unpatriotic" defense of the Spartans, with whom the Athenians were at war, on the grounds that the audience of the Lenaia was purely Athenian and that he was not speaking badly about Athens in the presence of non-citizens. There is, therefore, no danger of slander, he implies, any more that the opposing views put forward in the assembly can be so considered. What is more, in the public arena, where all are equal before the law and where all possess a comparable share of civic responsibil-

ity, what is important is the validity of a speech, even if it appears to be treasonous.

In this respect, the position of the comic hero—and, by extension, of comedy itself—is like that of an Athenian citizen attempting to convince the demos of the rightness of his beliefs. As with citizens, this right carries with it substantial responsibilities but also great latitude for free expression in the service of opinions deemed best for the city. This aspect is emphasized by Dikaiopolis in the same speech. Anticipating resistance to his defense of the Spartans, he asserts not only the justice of his speech as a character in a drama but also that of comedy itself: τὸ γὰρ δίκαιον οἶδε καὶ τρυγῳδία. / ἐγὼ δὲ λέξω δεινὰ μὲν δίκαια δέ ("For comedy knows justice, too. And I will speak things fearful but just," 500–01). Dikaiopolis presents his speech not simply as a dramatic speech designed to persuade his fellow characters but as the voice of his chosen genre.

Dikaiopolis' audience is a similar amalgam. Although he addresses an undifferentiated group of male spectators (ἄνδρες οἱ θεώμενοι), the phrase itself conceals a difference, since there are two groups of spectators evaluating his speech: the chorus of angry Acharnian farmers whom he is attempting to win over and the theater audience, whose votes and applause he seeks as a comic actor representing the poet and the genre. In this way, the business of the assembly with which the play begins (Dikaiopolis is awaiting the arrival of his fellow citizens at its meeting place on the Pnyx) reappears both directly, in Dikaiopolis' attempt to convert the Acharnians, and indirectly, as he tries to win over the actual audience and its representatives, the judges. Thus the forms of democratic deliberations are extremely important in *Acharnians* and are prominent throughout Aristophanes. Moreover, Dikaiopolis extends its importance beyond the concerns of his fellow comic characters to the wisdom of the genre as a whole located outside of the play.

Far from causing speakers to shy away from controversial subjects, this style of comic deliberation is a vehicle for expressing even the most extreme opinions—from the separate peace that Dikaiopolis concludes to the communist vision of *Ecclesiazusae*. Thus the city's sponsorship of the comic competition does not necessarily encourage a simple orthodoxy, instead it opens up a space both within and without the play where difference is not only tolerated but also assumed.[68] In this way, Old Comedy's status as a creation of the democratic polis did not compel it to become the obedient servant of the city. Instead, through that sponsorship, Old Comedy was able to unleash effects that challenged

Athenian beliefs and compelled citizens to imagine life from a broad range of alien perspectives.

Old Comedy, Aristophanes, and the Generic Past

Within the institutional context described in the previous section, Bakhtin's understanding of carnivalization takes on particular importance. In addition to their status as part of the civic apparatus, the plays of Aristophanes deploy a complex intertextuality that allows them to juxtapose features of the most heterogeneous kind—an intertexuality almost sufficient to allow us to question whether they can even be said to *belong* to a genre in any sense but the most conventional.[69]

In addition, the plots often involve realistic social or political problems that are solved by means of fantastic stratagems.[70] Fantasy is also apparent in the choruses, often composed of animals: both animal-like humans, such as we find in Aristophanes' *Wasps*, or the fully theriomorphic frogs from the play of the same name.[71] Multiple literary genres are invoked, often in quick sequence, particularly tragedy and comedy, but also Homer and the work of Archilochus and Hipponax. Likewise, the stylistic level and tone shift quickly from elevated lyric passages to scatology and sexual license.

This style of composition is heavily intertextual, both in the strict sense of interaction caused by the appearance of one literary text in the body of another and, more generally, in the commingling of forms of speech normally kept separate, whether because of modesty, as in the case of obscenity, or because the speech-users typically have little or no contact with each other.[72] Such a style clearly must have put extraordinary demands on the audience, and it is likely that spectators appreciated it in varying degrees.

The abundance of dialogic relations in Aristophanic comedy has far-reaching consequences for our understanding of how Old Comedy operates, for although these relations begin with generic material, as an ensemble, their generic characteristics are difficult to see. Genre is, of course, a productive concept for establishing organizing principles that allows us to generalize about *similar* objects. This sense of genre is most prevalent in discussions of literary history, but the idea of genre as type can be extended far beyond common usage to other special vocabularies and professional jargons (academic writing, for example) that identify the various subgroups of language-users. Even Bakhtin, who elsewhere emphasizes its porosity (e.g., 1984.3–4), sees genre as a unique way of

viewing the world and comments, "Where there is style, there is genre" (1986.66). But heavily dialogized texts like comedy point to the limits of such a formulation, for a text constituted by other texts, one whose style is largely dependent upon its amalgamation of other styles, becomes difficult to describe in terms that are simply generic. Indeed, comedy seems most intent on defining itself negatively against the established genres, displaying its wisdom by exposing their limitations and showing an intense awareness of their subtle constituents.[73]

Old Comedy's anti-generic orientation does not mean, paradoxically, that it is unconscious of its own status; indeed literary self-consciousness is one of its most marked characteristics.[74] Cratinus's *Wine Flask*, which exists only in fragments, is an excellent example of this literary and generic self-consciousness. The main character in the play (which won first prize in 423 and defeated Aristophanes' *Clouds*) is Cratinus himself, who is represented as a poet who has abandoned his wife, Comedy, in favor of the pleasures of wine, but who reconciles with her in the course of the play. On one level, *Wine Flask* illustrates allegorically the dialectic between the material substrate of comedy's robust vulgarity and the literary form of the comic genre that requires some moderation of festive excess (here the consumption of wine). Secondly, however, the play is an elaborate riposte to Aristophanes, who had represented Cratinus as a has-been and a drunk in *Knights* (531–36). By casting himself as the rejuvenated husband of Comedy, Cratinus represents himself as fully in possession of his comic faculties in spite of, or perhaps because of, his love of wine—denying Aristophanes' first charge while proudly affirming the other. In addition, by claiming Comedy for his faithful spouse, Cratinus implies an intimacy with Comedy that his rivals—who (evidently) must compose their works without access to the fertile source of laughter—do not possess.

Thus *Wine Flask* deploys a complex intertextuality and a keen generic self-awareness to assert Cratinus's continued importance in the comic competitions. At the same time, however, it makes an implicit statement about Old Comedy. Personified as a living being and not represented as an ossified literary structure, the genre is dynamic, capable of reacting to a changing environment. Even the sexual metaphor at the heart of Cratinus's play has important implications for Old Comedy. If the comic poet is married to the genre, writing must be like procreation and the play itself the offspring.[75] Thus we are presented with an image of Old Comedy as a child who resembles its forebears but is not identi-

cal to them. So Old Comedy's dynamic form and omnivorous appetite for new types of experience make it capable of responding to changing circumstances while remaining recognizably comic.

Such self-consciousness and intertextual awareness is further developed and displayed in the *parabasis*, a typical scene during which the chorus, left alone on stage, addresses the audience both in its own name and in the name of the poet, giving advice to the spectators and judges about the play being performed, other plays by the author (good) and his rivals (embarrassingly bad), as well as assorted political issues—after which another dramatic episode follows.[76] Curiously, this strong juxtaposition, produced by the shift from iambic trimeter dialogue to recitation in a variety of meters, is never commented upon, and yet this combination of extreme self-consciousness with a willful determination to ignore the effect of striking changes of content and delivery seem absolutely consistent with the type of spectacle produced by the writers of Old Comedy.[77] Never does it seem that there is a fixed point of reference, beyond the comic competition of which the play is a part. Instead, the style is freewheeling, with serious and comic topics alternately undermined by each other. This aspect looks central to the genre's self-identity. The chorus of *Frogs* prays: "[Grant us the ability] to say many things serious (σπουδαῖα) and many laughable (γέλοια)" (391–92).[78] The ceaseless fluid movements and frequent dialogic interactions between genres and styles show Old Comedy to be intensely carnivalized, a fact that is perceptible even in the pitiful fragments (outside the plays of Aristophanes) that we possess.

The most striking thing about Aristophanic intertextuality is the sheer diversity of material, with its equally diverse implications. Specific pronouncements, innuendoes, insults, and attacks do not illuminate clearly a single, shaping consciousness but exist in dialogic relationships with one another. No single style, not even the authorial voice of the *parabasis*, is able to establish itself as an authority beyond impeachment. Instead, linguistic elements are progressively undermined by incongruous and incompatible sentiments expressed elsewhere.[79] Nor are they reducible to a simple hierarchy within which real and fantastic, oligarchic and democratic, old-fashioned and newfangled elements can be sorted out to reveal the essential attitudes of Aristophanic comedy and to separate them from attitudes that are epiphenomenal, that is, presented for the sake of laughter but with no serious purpose.[80] Such divisions are spurious, as is the implicit claim that there are elements of comedy *not* for the sake of laughter and with only a serious purpose.

Instead, the juxtaposition of incompatible elements creates a climate of radical ambivalence, forcing audiences to choose from a broad range of interpretative possibilities.[81]

Old Comedy and, by extension, the art of Aristophanes seem to have been particularly well suited to the exploitation of the dialogic relations between different aspects of language. Styles, or levels of style, are juxtaposed, forced to coexist, and their resulting relationships are inevitably dialogic. The diction is relentlessly contemporary. Equally at home are the technical terms of commerce in fifth-century Athens and its regulation, as well as the fossilized formulae of the assembly and religious ritual, medical and scientific vocabularies, rhetorical jargon, references to the full range of food products, allusions to tragedy, and the colorful language of obscenity.

The list could go on, but the last two entries in this abbreviated catalogue call for some comment, for in addition to their status as parts of the contemporary Athenian scene and their often incongruous interaction with other stylistic registers, they also have something to say about comedy's generic heritage. Together obscenity and allusions to tragedy reveal much about the complex ways in which Aristophanic comedy both dialogizes the literary genres it attempts to incorporate and is, in turn, dialogized by them. This interplay, as I argued earlier, results in a reciprocal deformation of source text and appropriating genre. As it is a particularly important aspect of this book, it will be useful to look briefly, first, at how obscenity reveals a direct generic link with iambic poetry, comedy's precursor in the use of both, and, second, at how the late development of comedy vis-à-vis tragedy makes the cultural prestige of tragedy both an irresistible target and an unapproachable goal.

Obscenity, to state the obvious, is an important characteristic of Old Comedy. Jeffrey Henderson, in the opening chapter of *The Maculate Muse* (1991.1–29), emphasizes the public, extroverted nature of Greek obscenity, in contrast to modern ideas of pornography, which are predicated on individual privacy. Strepsiades the Athenian, for example, thinks nothing of recounting in great detail to Socrates (and to the thousands present in the audience) the story of a dish of soup he ate at the Panathenaic festival, and the farting and violent bowel movement that followed (*Clouds* 388–91). Strepsiades certainly does not represent the average Athenian here, but among comic characters (for example, the slaves engaged in feeding the dung beetle at the beginning of *Peace*), he does not stand out particularly.

Sexual references are likewise common and a source for much

physical humor. Kinesias, the husband of one of Lysistrata's coconspirators, whose name itself suggests a euphemism for sexual intercourse, is brought on stage wearing a large erect phallus, a casualty of the sex strike of the Athenian women (*Lysistrata* 845–972). In *Ecclesiazusae*, there is a contest between an old woman and a young one as to which should be able to sleep with a young man first (877–1101). The list goes on. Henderson 1990 catalogues Aristophanic obscenity—explicit, euphemistic, and metaphorical. From these examples, it is clear that the depiction of sexuality and scatology is an important part of Aristophanic comedy, and both are used regularly to advance its plots and emphasize the material level of human life.

Obscenity in Aristophanic comedy has important precursors in the social history of human, and perhaps proto-human, societies.[82] A number of these are evoked explicitly in Aristophanes. Aristotle saw phallic processions as important to the development of comedy (*Poetics* 1449all).[83] In *Acharnians*, Dikaiopolis stages a rustic festival of Dionysus that includes one of his slaves as the phallus-bearer. Ritual mockery, known as *aischrologia*, literally "shameful speech," was a feature of other celebrations as well. Best known is the ritual abuse that accompanied the Eleusinian Mysteries, the so-called *gephurismos*, at which masked citizens mocked the initiates as they passed under a bridge (*gephura*) on their way to the Eleusinian plain.[84] Likewise, at the Athenian festival of Demeter and Persephone, the Thesmophoria, the female participants engaged in ritual mockery in the context of a festival that emphasized fertility, among other things (see Burkert 1985, Parke 1987).

Even erotic art has an important public component. It is present in abundance on Greek pottery (see Kilmer 1993), particularly that designed for the aristocratic institution of the symposium, which featured erotic themes and party games.[85] Thus obscenity plays an important role in various aspects of Greek public life, and it is no accident that the traditions of phallic processions and Eleusinian abuse are echoed in Aristophanes, while the Thesmophoria is the basis for one of Aristophanes' most brilliant plays, *Thesmophoriazusae* (*Women Celebrating the Thesmophoria*).[86]

In addition to the anthropological substrate of obscenity, another generic resonance must be considered, that of iambic poetry, a form of monody that flourished in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.E. and was characterized by frequent graphic descriptions of sexuality. Aristophanes mined this tradition both directly, by quoting actual poems and mentioning authors by name, and indirectly, by using the tactics of

the iambographers to reduce his targets to familiar (literary and political) types. This genre is best represented by the fragments of Archilochus and Hipponax, whose works were preserved into the fifth century and beyond, and which feature obscene invective and direct personal attack.[87]

Much Aristophanic obscenity has this aggressive component as well. Indeed, at least one ancient scholar claimed that Susarion, the putative inventor of Attic comedy, was, in fact, the originator of iambic poetry.[88] Consider a fairly representative example from *Knights*, an exchange of threats between the vile Paphlagon (the politician Cleon), who is the de facto ruler of the city, and his upstart challenger, a Sausage-Seller from the marketplace (364–65):

Saus. I'll use your asshole for a sausage skin!
Paph. I'll throw you out the door headfirst by your ass.

The abusive obscenity of these lines is typical of Aristophanes. Threats of rape are also fairly common. Dikaiopolis imagines catching a servant girl out in the field and assaulting her (*Acharnians* 271–75). Peisthetairos in *Birds* even threatens to rape the goddess Iris when she crosses the frontier of Nephelococcygia to deliver Zeus's ultimatum to the city of birds (1253–56). The contest between Right and Wrong in *Clouds* is decided on the basis of Right's admission that everyone in the audience is *euryproktos*, "broad-assed," the result of habitual anal intercourse (1083–1104).

Much of this sounds like the reverberation of carnival laughter, but here the literary-historical dimension is as important as its anthropological substrate. The vocabulary of obscenity in Aristophanes bears significant similarity to that of the iambographers Hipponax and Archilochus. Ralph Rosen argues for a continuity of practice between the two genres as well.[89] He connects the use of iambic targets like Lycambes and Boupalus in Archilochus and Hipponax, whose status as historical figures has long been questioned, with Aristophanes' supposedly historical quarrel with Cleon.[90] If he is correct, then Aristophanic obscenity preserves not only the diction of iambic poetry but its tactics as well. The resulting situations border on the vertiginous, as one of Aristophanic comedy's most central attributes, its topicality and direct connection with everyday life, becomes a literary motif with no direct referentiality.

There are certainly difficulties with this view. Cleon is an historical figure, after all, well attested in historical sources, with a prominent political profile. He cannot be understood *simply* as a character in a traditional entertainment in the manner of a Lycambes or a Boupalus.

Nevertheless, the influence of the iambographers is palpable in Aristophanes. He alludes to their poems in his plays, quotes Archilochus at length (West 5, lines 1–3 = *Peace* 1298–99, 1301), and, in their manner, dramatizes fierce quarrels between himself and his targets. Whether or not the homology between these characters and the historical individuals they are supposed to represent is exact, Aristophanes seems eager to position himself as a sort of neo-iambographer when it suits his interests to do so.

One result of this maneuver is that Aristophanes' targets undergo a metamorphosis. Whatever the status of Cleon as an historical figure, in Aristophanes, and under the influence of Archilochus and Hipponax, he becomes an iambic type, deprived of the unique features possessed by flesh-and-blood human beings. The familiarity of such types to Aristophanes' audience means that the iambic tradition can be deployed as a kind of shorthand that functions both synchronically with contemporary Athenian life and diachronically with an important part of the literary tradition.[91]

First as Tragedy, Then as Farce

The spirit of tragedy is never distant from the Aristophanic stage, the full significance of which can only be appreciated by keeping in mind the agonistic spirit of Athenian artistic culture. Historically, the most common relationship must have been via the burlesque of heroic legend, which, as I have already mentioned, was an important aspect of early comedy. As such, comedy would often have made fun of stories treated with seriousness in tragedy. Another phenomenon would have created further common ground. The satyr-drama that followed the conclusion of each tragedian's contribution featured half-man, half-goat creatures indulging in typical satyric activities such as drinking and sexual pursuit. Burlesque of myth was common in the satyr plays as well. This aspect of the genre can be seen in the only complete example to survive, Euripides' *Cyclops*, which revisits the story of Odysseus's visit to the island of Polyphemus, best known from the ninth book of the *Odyssey*. Thus when comic writers like Cratinus produce comedies with titles like *Odysseuses* and treat the story of the Trojan War (*Dionysalexandros*), they may well have been traversing territory well trod by the tragic poets in satyric drama.

Early comedy frequently exploited the mythological tradition for its plots, a tactic that would have inevitably created an interaction between the two genres. Such exploitation was not apparently an attrac-

tive proposition for Aristophanes, however. Among the approximately forty-three titles that are attributed to him, none appears to have had a primarily mythological theme. In the extant plays, only short scenes in *Birds* and *Frogs* are based on the mythological tradition.[92] As Aristophanes often makes clear, his quarrel was with the tragedians, not the mythographers. Here, however, Aristophanes operates from a position of weakness, for despite comedy's sponsorship by the city, tragedy's status as the original Athenian dramatic form gave it a preeminence that comedy never enjoyed. Further, the association of tragedy with moral exempla and the values of the heroic mythological age gave it a seriousness that comedy's relentless debunking spirit could not equal. This seriousness was further adumbrated by tragedy's elevated diction, a blend of literary Doric and poetic language far removed from the speech of Athenians in everyday life.

The spirit of competition (Hesiod's "good strife," we might say) that enflamed so many rivalries meant that Aristophanes and comic writers of a similar temperament would not necessarily be satisfied with first prize in a comic competition if that did not bring with it a public stature commensurable with that of the tragedians. When Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians* excuses his speech on the grounds that "comedy knows justice, too" (500) his "too" (καί) clearly reveals comedy's sense of frustrated entitlement, as do the emphases of the choruses of *Clouds* and *Wasps* when they feel the need to assert the "wisdom" of Aristophanes' plays.[93] A more polemical approach is taken in the *parabasis* to *Birds* (785–89):

> Nothing is better or more sweet than to have wings.
> If one of you spectators were winged, straightaway,
> As soon as you got hungry and tired of the tragic dancers,
> You'd fly off and have lunch at home.
> Then when you were full, you'd fly back here to us.

Tragedy does not come out very well in this passage. It is represented as boring, or at least lengthy and insufficiently engaging to stave off the pangs of hunger.[94] Moreover, tragedy's deficiencies are clear (versus comedy), for it is the comic fantasy of men becoming birds that provides the antidote (wings) for the difficulties caused by tragedy's tedium. Furthermore, the chorus of *Birds* expects the benefits they confer to produce a certain kind of party loyalty. The "us" to whom they refer is, of course, comedy itself. The winged audiences will not, after all, fly all over the place after they get their snack, but will hurry back to see a play of Aristophanes.

Thus the opposition between comedy and tragedy in this passage is clear. Comedy both debunks the tragic mystique and, at the same time, defines itself against tragedy. The result, from the perspective of Aristophanes, anyway, is to invert the traditional pecking order between tragedy and comedy, while exploiting tragedy's reputation in order to produce diverse comic effects.

The pattern visible in the *Birds parabasis* is found countless times throughout Aristophanes. Tragedy either takes center stage or it acts as background noise for comic effects that both advance the plot of the comedy and exert a destabilizing force on tragedy's awful seriousness.[95] We hear anecdotes about tragic actors like the unfortunate Hegelochus, whose supposed mispronunciation caused a dignified line of Euripides (*Orestes* 279) to be recalled with malicious glee.[96] Tragedians are brought on stage (*Acharnians*, *Thesmophoriazusae*, *Frogs*) and forced to speak the language of comedy. Alternately, they speak their own lines and discuss their own plays. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, Euripides is even compelled to become a tragic actor on a comic stage, as he impersonates successively, although not successfully, several of his own heroes in an attempt to bring about the release of his relative, who is being held captive by the miso-Euripidean band of women.

Other comic characters are fans of tragedy. Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians* and Dionysus in *Frogs* describe themselves as partisans of Aeschylus and Euripides, respectively. Yet even these two are no simple examples of homage, as the credibility of both characters is undermined in each play. Their simple admiration for their heroes becomes just another kind of indirect attack on tragedy's status. Elsewhere, characters quote tragedy with lofty foolishness, sometimes with a specific author in mind, other times simply intending to give their discourse a spurious air of sophistication.

Throughout Aristophanic comedy, therefore, tragedy is seldom far from the surface of the play, as comedy tries to represent tragedy's great reputation as undeserved, with the apparent aim of supplanting it in the eyes of the city. But the relationship between the two is clearly symbiotic, for tragedy is also a major springboard from which comedy comes to define itself. Without it, Aristophanes would be deprived of a major part of his parodic arsenal. Thus the relationship between comedy and tragedy as expressed by Aristophanes in programmatic statements like that in the *parabasis* of *Birds* belies a degree of complicity whose most evident beneficiary is the opportunistic comic poet seeking to position

his genre as the only one offering a comprehensive critique of the city, its desires, and its self-infatuation.[97]

My approach in this book attempts to take seriously the phenomena of carnivalization and intertextuality as developed by Bakhtin and in the preceding discussion of the effect of dialogic interaction in Aristophanes. The understanding of Aristophanic comedy that emerges from such an enterprise emphasizes the ambivalence of Aristophanes' thought and produces readings different from traditional narratives of Aristophanes,[98] while providing a valuable hedge against reductive readings of the plays that privilege one register of meaning (serious vs. comic, peace vs. war, Euripides vs. Aeschylus, aristocrats vs. democrats, Aristophanes the reactionary vs. Aristophanes the apostle of comic freedom, etc.) over all others.[99]

The readings that emerge suggest that views concerning the specific socio-political orientation of Aristophanic comedy benefit from an approach predicated on the notion that the work of Aristophanes lies at the nexus of conflicting forces and that it stages their intense, if unstable, interaction.[100] Moreover, they offer a model of reading that is comprehensible in the light of the comic playwright's need to structure his work within the intensely competitive environment of the festival to give it the broadest possible appeal and so increase his chances for victory.[101] This broad appeal, I argue, is accomplished not by simplifying the play's content but by cultivating from the beginning a heterogeneous mix of material calculated to appeal to different social strata and to different levels of education, ability, and attention.

I demonstrate the processes at work in Aristophanic comedy with a detailed analysis of specimen passages from a broad range of Aristophanes' work. The order of chapters is roughly chronological, with much movement back and forth in the Aristophanic corpus, particularly in chapters 4 and 5, with their broader thematic ranges. Chapter 1 focuses on the prologue of *Acharnians*, which opens with Dikaiopolis lamenting the pains he has suffered and all-too-few pleasures he has enjoyed in recent times. His subject turns out to be the continuation of the war with Sparta and the Athenians' preference for idle conversation in the agora when they should be arriving early on the Pnyx to deliberate peace. Yet the political force of his monologue is almost entirely overshadowed in lines 1–16 by his narrow focus on the pains and pleasures of being a spectator. The chapter analyzes the intense interplay of tragic, comic, and musical associations and argues that the aesthetic tableau

presented by the play's opening lines establishes a rhetorical situation in which, at least for the ideal viewer, all genres are compromised by their associations. Thus what appears to less savvy spectators simply as an affirmation of the good old days of Aeschylean tragedy is, in fact, a complex interplay of comic and tragic quotation and allusion.

The *Acharnians* prologue offers a useful test case for discussing the problem of tragic parody as a phenomenon where words are "double-voiced," both retaining the specificity they had in their source texts and acquiring additional resonance in their new contexts. A further qualification is needed, however, as the term "source" itself is problematic. Although in hypothesizing audience reaction, scholars tend to imagine the Athenians as a homogenous group that either "gets it" or doesn't, it is fruitful to consider the audiences of Aristophanic comedy as laughing at jokes, particularly parody, for very different reasons, according to their abilities and education. The resourceful comic poet could no doubt anticipate such a range of reactions with a fair degree of accuracy. Thus while it is important for scholars to note the precise reference of a parody, it may well be that much of the audience laughs for reasons that are spurious from a philological perspective but exploited by the opportunistic playwright. This way of looking at parody is very useful for interpreting Aristophanes, replacing the perennial question of Aristophanic scholarship, namely, the degree to which audiences were able to follow the indisputable yet often obscure references to specific tragic (or comic) plays.

Chapter 2 picks up the argument that the fine structure of Aristophanic comedy reveals the presence of centrifugal, or decentralizing, elements that undermine the ability of *Clouds* to be read simply as an attack on Socrates, Euripides, Cleon, or the Sophists. To demonstrate this style of "reading against the grain" in *Clouds*, I consider two minor phenomena that have important implications for thinking about the way Aristophanic comedy works: the historicity of Megacles son of Megacles, Strepsiades' father-in-law, and the incongruous presence of lyric alphas in the Cloud chorus' *parados*. I argue that these minor phenomena should not be dismissed as insignificant but should be seen as small pieces of the grand tissue of mockery that is the ground of *Clouds* (and of Aristophanic comedy in general). From there, I consider the agon of *Clouds*, where the complex intertextuality of the interaction, provided in part by allusions to Euripides' *Telephus*, undermines the ability of the two *logoi*, Right and Wrong, to present their cases effectively. The conclusion of the agon, I argue, is the result of Right's monological inflexibility,

together with Wrong's opportunistic mastery of rhetoric. Yet Wrong does not emerge unscathed from the encounter and is fully discredited, even as he records his victory.

Chapter 3 focuses on the modest claims *Wasps* makes for itself in the prologue (elaborated by the slave Xanthias) to show that his expression of the play's limited aspirations is undermined even as it is delivered, then completely overturned in the *parabasis*. It continues with an examination of *Wasps*' and *Clouds*' *parabases* to show how their concerns and diction suggest not a departure from Aristophanes' previous practice but, instead, an explicit evocation of the spirit of *Clouds*.

In order to make that claim, however, it is necessary to discuss the *parabasis* in general and some of the interpretive problems it poses. I argue that while the *parabasis* of *Wasps* claims to emulate the intellectual aims of *Clouds*, the presence of the chorus as an intermediary between author and audience screens the author from the view of the spectator (although like anyone else, he could, of course, make his views known through other, non-literary means) and prevents him from delivering a message that is not shaped by the intermediary that delivers it. As a result, many of the authorial assertions made in the *parabases* of *Clouds* and *Wasps* are weakened by the gap that opens up between the report of the author's opinion and the opinion itself. In the case of *Wasps*, this gap creates a profound internal fragmentation, as the play negotiates the space between its claims of moderation and its inescapable sympathy with *Clouds*-style highbrow comedy.

Chapter 4 considers five passages in which Aristophanic comedy engages directly with the epic-oracular tradition. I also argue for the logic of grouping oracular speech together with epic, not only on the basis of metrical affinities but also on the basis of the style of their implicit appeals to authority. Throughout the passages, a consistent strategy is visible for resisting the authority of epic-oracular discourse. Such discourse appears to have its strongest effects when it is allowed to develop at its famous leisurely pace, and, for this reason, interruption is a particularly effective strategy for characters attempting to undermine it. These interruptions come in two forms. The first marks the assimilation of the oracular mode by the resisting character and consists of interruptions that complete hexameter lines, thus capping them in accord with the will of the interrupter. The other style of interruption takes place at line end: the interrupter initiates a bathetic movement from hexameter to trimeter and forces the interlocutor to complete the line, becoming thereby a coconspirator in his own defeat.

Moreover, the assimilation of the oracular mode by the resisting character has the effect of diluting the unique character of epic language and thus turning it into another species of everyday speech, to be evaluated along similar lines. The assumption made by characters who attempt to wield oracular authority on their own is that it is a privileged form of discourse not open to all. By contesting that proprietary notion, resisters of epic-oracular authority turn hexameter poetry into a lingua franca and thus reduce its rhetorical power.

Finally, I cite examples in which resisters of the specifically Homeric forms of epic authority effectively adapt Homer to their own particular needs. In all of these examples, the substantive issues of comedy are fought for on the level of language. In such struggles, traditionally privileged discourses like dactylic hexameter poetry in its various forms are subjected to a scrutiny vis-à-vis other genres that their monolithic structures do not normally have to encounter. When this occurs, hexameter poetry is relativized by its contact with other polymetric genres, and resourceful characters find ways to exploit this weakness to their own benefit.

Chapter 5 considers the multiple uses to which Aristophanes puts Euripides' story of Telephus, by casting the tragic hero, and Euripides himself, in the classic role of floating signifiers whose significance is determined by rhetorical expediency. Euripides is, in a sense, the perfect tool for a style of comedy that seeks to subject everything to its withering critique. Indeed, Euripides' emphasis on expressing the rhetorical possibilities of classic situations mirrors Aristophanes' own predilections and arguably makes Euripides Aristophanes' tragic doppelgänger. As a result of these multiple and conflicted relationships, Euripides is profoundly ambivalent throughout Aristophanes and functions as a typical example of tragic self-importance and as the most appropriate instrument of Aristophanes' critique of tragedy.[102]

Telephus exhibits a similar ambiguity. In *Acharnians*, it has a double function, based on rhetorical expediency and the acknowledged rhetorical *deinotes*, "cleverness," of Telephus himself, together with what Aristophanes was to interpret routinely as Euripides' indifference to tragic dignity. The beggar-king serves as both an icon for Euripides' vulgarization of tragedy and as a useful instrument for driving the comic plot. The relationship between these two meanings of *Telephus* is never resolved in *Acharnians*, and each use of *Telephus* exerts a dialogical, limiting influence on the implicit claims of the other.

Another set of dialogical relations is present in *Thesmophoriazusae*,

which reprises the *Telephus* theme but to completely different ends. On the one hand, the play clearly asserts its genetic and generic affiliation with *Acharnians* through the hostage scene, but while *Acharnians* had emphasized the unheroic aspects of Telephus (his costume, his facility with speech) in order to portray Euripides as a creator of beggars (as Aeschylus does in *Frogs* 1063 vs. *Acharnians* 410–12), *Thesmophoriazusae* ignores this idea, concentrating instead on the place of tragic mimesis on the comic stage.[103] Thus *Telephus* is compelled to share the stage with the other Euripidean parodies that structure *Thesmophoriazusae*. The result is a wholesale dilution of the authority for the *Telephus* that appeared in *Acharnians*. Moreover, the shifting significance of Euripides in *Thesmophoriazusae* causes the play to exist in a highly ambivalent relationship with *Acharnians*, further complicating the irresolvable conflicts of that play.

By developing Bakhtin's work to emphasize the radical ambivalence of Aristophanic comedy, and by resisting the call to put a limit on referentiality, I may appear to produce an Aristophanes whose work becomes meaningless, lost in a whirl of ambiguities. This does not mean that I think that political readings are impossible or ill-advised. What this book suggests, and lays the groundwork for, is the possibility of a political reading of Aristophanes based on the antinomian elements produced by the complex textuality that I try to document and analyze by means of Bakhtin's work. By analyzing the subtle ambivalence produced by the intertextual dimensions of the text, this book attempts to describe aspects of Aristophanic comedy that deviate from, and ironize, its overall conservative orientation and that interrogate its basic premises.

The situation that results is messy from an interpretative point of view, as it denies the existence of a fixed center that allows one to determine the field and ground of serio-comic literature with some confidence. On the other hand, this style of reading gives access to the "joyful relativity" of Aristophanic comedy that derives from his apparent willingness to ridicule anything that makes a claim for itself.[104] This attitude strikes me as one consistent with the demands on any poet to appeal to a broad and diverse audience.[105] Likewise, the complex polemical attitude with which Aristophanic comedy approaches the other genres, particularly tragedy, seems well adapted for an ambitious author, eager to assert his personal superiority to competitors, comic and non-comic alike.

1 Dikaiopolis on Modern Art

> The material of the text is not dead, it is speaking, signifying . . . we can always hear voices.—Mikhail Bakhtin

> Therefore, one can say that any word exists for the speaker in three aspects: as a neutral word of a language, belonging to nobody; as an *other's* word, which belongs to another person and is filled with echoes of the other's utterance; and, finally, as *my* word, for since I am dealing with it in a particular situation, with a particular speech plan, it is already imbued with my expression.—Mikhail Bakhtin

Interpretations of *Acharnians* often focus on the play's political dimension. There is nothing surprising here. Indeed, the 425 production date—during the war with Sparta—together with the broad outline of the plot—an unpatriotic separate peace with Sparta—make a political reading of the play attractive, perhaps irresistible. At the same time, the play is acknowledged by all to contain an important intertextual component.[1] Euripides' *Telephus* is most prominent in this respect, as Dikaiopolis uses its language and plot to win over his adversaries and to bring about the peace with Sparta for which he longs.[2] Euripidean tragedy as a whole is another important extra-generic feature of *Acharnians*, as the tragedian himself makes an appearance, along with a closet full of his tragic heroes (405–79). This intertextuality is not easily reconciled with a political reading of the play, however; the fusion is seldom attempted and the implications of intertextuality are not always elaborated beyond the cataloguing of allusions. Most common is the tacit assumption by

those advancing political interpretations of *Acharnians* that politics is primary and intertextuality aesthetic and epiphenomenal.[3]

Such a distinction cannot be maintained in good faith, however. There is no basis in Aristophanic comedy to justify a hierarchical relationship between stylistic and thematic elements, for when there is a multiplicity of styles, there are dialogical relationships between them, and in the presence of dialogical relations, there is no single interpretative register.[4] As Bakhtin puts it, novelistic discourse is characterized by a "plenitude of . . . languages—all of which are equally capable of being 'languages of truth' but . . . all of which are equally relative, reified, and limited" (1981.366–67). So also in Aristophanes, the political and literary discourses here juxtaposed exert a similar relativizing effect on one another, thus creating a critical impasse that can only be resolved arbitrarily. If we reject the exclusionary logic implied by the need to privilege some Aristophanic attitudes over others judged to be less central, Aristophanes' ability to employ multiple discourses without assigning special authority to any comes into view, the result being a complex interaction by which the presence of one "voice" acts to destabilize the other. Thus the authority of the political dimension of *Acharnians* is not denied but limited, and thereby undermined, by the complex aesthetic affiliations of the text, just as an entirely aesthetic interpretation of the play would be undermined by its connections with contemporary political discussion and decision-making at Athens.

A comprehensive interpretation of *Acharnians*, then, would be a major undertaking, for it would have to bring together the literary resonances of *Acharnians*' intertextuality with the political issues engaged by the action of the play, seeking to integrate them at a higher interpretive level. Such a project is extremely complex, though I shall return to one aspect of it in Chapter 5 with an analysis of the way in which Aristophanes' polyvalent construction of the Telephus story (predominantly in *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae*) displaces political considerations by devoting sustained attention to aesthetic and intertextual issues. In this chapter, my goals are more modest, as I concentrate on the opening monologue of *Acharnians*. The substance of this analysis, however, is crucial for my general point about the interaction of voices within Aristophanic comedy. The intertextual relationships self-consciously invoked by Dikaiopolis in the monologue open *Acharnians* to self-relativizing, discordant forces and thereby introduce irreducible elements of ambivalence into the play.[5]

It will be useful to have Dikaiopolis' opening lines before us (1–19)[6]:

ὅσα δὴ δέδηγμαι τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ καρδίαν,
ἥσθην δὲ βαιά, πάνυ δὲ βαιά, τέτταρα·
ἃ δ' ὠδυνήθην, ψαμμακοσιογάργαρα.
φέρ' ἴδω, τί δ' ἥσθην ἄξιον χαιρηδόνος;
ἐγῷδ' ἐφ' ᾧ γε τὸ κέαρ ηὐφράνθην ἰδών,
τοῖς πέντε ταλάντοις οἷς Κλέων ἐξήμεσεν.
ταῦθ' ὡς ἐγανώθην, καὶ φιλῶ τοὺς ἱππέας
διὰ τοῦτο τοὔργον· ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι.
ἀλλ' ὠδυνήθην ἕτερον αὖ τραγῳδικόν,
ὅτε δὴ 'κεχήνη προσδοκῶν τὸν Αἰσχύλον,
ὁ δ' ἀνεῖπεν, εἴσαγ' ὦ Θέογνι τὸν χορόν.
πῶς τοῦτ' ἔσεισέ μου δοκεῖς τὴν καρδίαν;
ἀλλ' ἕτερον ἥσθην, ἡνίκ' ἐπὶ Μόσχῳ ποτὲ
Δεξίθεος εἰσῆλθ' ᾄσόμενος Βοιώτιον.
τῆτες δ' ἀπέθανον καὶ διεστράφην ἰδών,
ὅτε δὴ παρέκυψε Χαῖρις ἐπὶ τὸν ὄρθιον.
ἀλλ' οὐδεπώποτ' ἐξ ὅτου 'γὼ ῥύπτομαι
οὕτως ἐδήχθην ὑπὸ κονίας τὰς ὀφρῦς
ὡς νῦν . . .

How often I've bitten my heart
And rejoiced at but a few things, very few—four.
But I've wept at countless sandstorms of them.
Let's see, what did I take pleasure in that was worthy of joy?
I know one thing my heart leapt at—
When Cleon spat up those five talents.
That delighted me. I love the Knights
For that work. It was worthy of Greece.
But I grieved at another tragic event,
When I sat there gaping, waiting for Aeschylus,
And the herald cried out, "Theognis, bring in your chorus."
How do you think I felt then?
But I liked something else, when Dexitheus came in once
After Moschos singing the Boeotian song.
And this year I died looking
When Chairis bent himself around playing the Orthian tune.
But never since I began to wash
Have my eyes been bitten by the dust
As now . . .

In contrast to the loose structure of the action that follows, the prologue to *Acharnians* is tightly structured and bound together by verbal echoes: ἥσθην, "I rejoiced," (2, 13) and ὠδυνήθην, "I suffered," (3, 9) are repeated, while forms of δάκνειν, "bite," clearly operate in tandem (δέδηγμαι [1] vs. ἐδήχθην [18]). Likewise, ἰδών, "having seen," appears twice at line end (5, 15). The sense of formal balance created by these repetitions is further enhanced by the synonymous pairing of ηὐφράνθην (5) and ἐγανώθην (7), both of which are synonymous in turn with ἥσθην.[7] The effect of these repetitions is to bind together the first part of the *Acharnians* prologue (1–19) and to constitute aesthetic issues as a privileged category within the play—in fact, at this point, it is the *only* category.

The second half of Dikaiopolis' monologue (19–42) will introduce political life as another important part of *Acharnians*, specifically the dissatisfaction felt by farmers like Dikaiopolis who want nothing more than a quick resolution to the war with Sparta that has disrupted their lives and compromised their livelihoods (see Carter 1986, Olson 2002.78). Nevertheless, Aristophanes structures the opening monologue in such a way that the political issues that will motivate Dikaiopolis' actions are concealed at the beginning. As a result, political issues are not able to displace completely the aesthetic ground laid by Dikaiopolis' opening lines, and the two elements are involved in a dialogical relationship that does not appear to be resolvable.

An even greater complexity and an even more thoroughgoing ambivalence exist on the linguistic level, where there is an internal destabilization of the linguistic relationships. To see this process in operation, I examine the language of Dikaiopolis' prologue—a finely woven web of quotation, allusion, reiteration, social dialect, and echo that evokes myriad textual and associative possibilities, each with a claim to our exclusive allegiance that undermines the equally exclusive claims of its competitors.

To begin, the location of the play is not clearly delineated until line 20. The *skene* does not appear to have been used for the opening scenes, and Dikaiopolis is probably alone on stage. Alternatively, Niall Slater suggests that Dikaiopolis may emerge from the audience to begin his monologue.[8] If the first case, then the dramatic possibilities are obviously wide open, with no formal structure to limit or otherwise condition the expectations of the audience. If the latter, the situation is still extremely ambiguous. A character emerging from the seats might suggest a play thematically related to other apparently metatheatrical

plays like Aristophanes' *Proagon*.[9] This hypothesis, of course, cannot be confirmed conclusively but, if true, would suggest a range of possibilities to an audience.

To describe the prologue as spoken by *Dikaiopolis* is somewhat misleading. Although his character comes through clearly enough in his words and actions, his name and its suggestive associations ("just city") do not appear until later (406). This is not particularly rare in Aristophanes. The name of the Sausage-Seller is not revealed until the very end of *Knights* (1257). Nevertheless, in *Knights*, the metamorphosis of the hitherto nameless Sausage-Seller into Agoracritus, "he who judges in the agora," is very significant for our understanding of the play; situated as it is at the climax of the action, it constitutes a major interpretive crux.[10] In *Acharnians*, as in *Knights*, the postponement of the character's name throws it into relief.

The name Dikaiopolis offers a crux of its own, however, for its significance remains murky. The character's behavior suggests to some that he is the embodiment of a self-aggrandizing city rather than a just one, as the name should signify. E. L. Bowie argues that the name was significant less for its thematic redolence than as a pseudonym for Eupolis, Aristophanes' comic rival, the true protagonist of *Acharnians*.[11] Others have seen in Dikaiopolis the incarnation of the spirit of comedy itself (Hubbard 1991.43, with bibliography). These positions are not obviously compatible, but the non-negligible evidence for them underscores the degree to which ancient audiences brought to the theater a wealth of expectations that a dramatist could exploit, consistently or not.[12] Here the absence of the protagonist's name creates a vacuum that the audience will attempt to fill with their own expectations and inferences in the first part of the play. It is this uncertainty (which at no time appears to be fully resolved) that complicates the interpretation of Dikaiopolis' opening words.

I argue that the opening tableau of *Acharnians* blurs the dramatic situation of the play. I continue by analyzing the way in which the fine structure of Dikaiopolis' opening lament adds further complications and brings the full range of Athenian society under Aristophanes' comic scrutiny. As a result, *Acharnians* is less important as a source for Aristophanes' views on the great questions of the day than as an expression of the Athenian comic dramatist's need to structure laughter in such a way as to exploit the broadest range of humor and appeal to the broadest range of tastes.

Dikaiopolis begins his speech in a straightforward comic way. The

complaints with which he starts off are a common feature of Aristophanic comedy. Only *Ecclesiazusae* unambiguously begins without a character who is dissatisfied about something. Second, on the formal level, each of the first eleven lines contains at least one resolved longum or anapestic foot substitution, phenomena strenuously avoided in tragedy but which appear with less constraint in comedy.[13] Third, Porson's bridge, observed with much less fidelity in comedy than in tragedy, is violated as early as the end of the first line.

If the beginning of *Acharnians* employs typical comic meter and themes, the diction in the opening lines is less genre specific. δάκνεσθαι τὴν καρδίαν is found a number of times in comedy, but the idea of biting as "faire souffrir moralement" is well established from the time of Homer.[14] βαιά ("few") appears again at *Clouds* 1013 and three other places in comedy, but is common in Aeschylus and Sophocles with a range of uses.[15] In tragedy, it often appears in iambic trimeter passages but occasionally in lyrics.[16] This aspect of its usage seems to indicate an upper stylistic register for the word, a fact that perhaps accounts for its appearance in Pindar as well (see Olson 2002.65, Hope 1905.16). βαιά is therefore a clear example of a word that does triple duty in Aristophanes in the sense Bakhtin describes in the second epigram to this chapter. If not a neutral part of the language, it is not so removed from ordinary speech that it requires special glossing to make it intelligible, but it is also a word of the "other," specifically high poetry. Third, it is a word of Aristophanes, who uses it to create a character who can both profit from and expose the pretensions of tragic language.[17] In this case, he does both: βαιά elevates his tone and thus increases the force of his rhetorical appeal to the audience. However, the transparency of his tactics also undermines their rhetorical force.

The repetition of βαιά in line 2, emphasizing the paucity of pleasures experienced by Dikaiopolis, followed by the bathetic specificity of τέτταρα, "four," diminishes substantially the poetic dignity of expression attached to the tragic word and its repetition, as its juxtaposition with τέτταρα produces an incongruity that draws attention to its stylistic preciosity. This shift of linguistic registers is also indicated if Kenneth Dover is correct in his suspicion (1987.227) that the unparalleled use of δέ in the repetition of πάνυ results from an attempt to represent the speech of uneducated rustics.

In addition, the use of tragic language itself points to the limitations of Dikaiopolis' comic rhetoric by implying that its own resources are insufficient and it is in need of tragic supplementation (cf. Strauss

1966.43). Thus despite the fact that Aristophanes appropriates a word of tragedy and makes it his own, he does not avoid the fact that, according to Bakhtin, the word "which belongs to another person . . . is filled with echoes of the other's utterance."[18] The result is the creation of an intersecting set of relations that undermine the thrust of Dikaiopolis' rhetoric on one level, even as they enhance it on another.

This classification based on the "multiple ownership" of a word will be applicable to all words, to a greater or lesser degree, with each of the three elements allowed some diminution of importance in specific contexts. The significance of the word as neutral object will increase or decrease according to the genre of the "other" that employs it: the more artificial and uncommon the word, the less neutral it appears and the greater the chance that its presence will produce stylistic interaction. A profusion of direct, well-marked quotations, on the other hand, will minimize the ironizing effects of stylistic interaction by creating a new level of stylistic homogeneity.[19]

Authorial words are likewise ambivalent, as they can exist in several different relationships to the language. When an author makes a point of his or her use of common speech, and thus creates a stylistic level unrelieved by the introduction of literary heteroglossia, the result is a lower stylistic register whose effects range from the inspired glossolalia of Beckett's *How It Is* to the bathos-laden world of popular-culture products like *The Simpsons*. In between these two extremes, attempts to write using only neutral language tend toward a kind of naive realism that denies the artifice of writing altogether and lays claim to absolute authenticity.[20]

Glib or unacknowledged quotation, on the other hand, can heighten the significance of artifice and privileges the authorial voice while reducing the importance of the other (the *source* of the quotation) to something not worth a digression. Such quotations produce their own style of ambivalence, in that their recognition is dependent on the abilities of the audience. Naive spectators or readers interpret the unacknowledged quotation as a manifestation of the author's unique personal voice, for better or worse. Readers familiar with the source of the quotation, however, interpret it both on the level of stylistic interaction and as part of the author's rhetorical appeal to their finely attuned literary-aesthetic sensibilities.[21] These readers would be disappointed, if not insulted, to have the source of the quotation pedantically identified.

This complex interaction between language levels is thus an ongoing process that develops before the eyes of the various audiences, and the prologue to *Acharnians* offers abundant illustration of its effects.

Aristophanes' neologism ψαμμακοσιογάργαρα, "countless sandstorms" (3), presents an interesting variation on this theme. Lexically it is the antithesis of Dikaiopolis' βαιά (2), itself the product of a complex textual interaction, as has been discussed. ψαμμακοσιογάργαρα, too, appears to have important literary resonances. The idea of sand as uncountable goes back to Homer and is doubtless proverbial. Jean Taillardat describes (1965.377, 498) Aristophanes' coinage as an example of his characteristic renovation of common metaphors.

More can be said, however. The second half of the compound, -γάργαρα, signifies a very large number and seems to have enjoyed a certain vogue among writers of comedy, here as elsewhere connoisseurs of excess. The noun γάργαρα, "lots," appears in Aristomenes (frag. 1 K.-A.), an older contemporary of Aristophanes, and in the *Komoidotragoidia* of Alcaeus the comic poet, whose *Pasiphae* competed against Aristophanes' *Plutus* in 388.[22] There is thus a reasonable possibility that one or more of these passages were known to Aristophanes, either as a source for allusion or as part of the comic repertoire freely drawn upon by the apparently close-knit circle of comic poets.[23]

The scholiast also notes that the related verb γαργαίρειν, "be numerous," occurs in a fragment from an unknown play of Cratinus (frag. 321 K.-A.), with whom Aristophanes appears to have had a lively rivalry.[24] Cratinus is insulted by name in *Acharnians* (848) and treated as a drunken has-been in *Knights* (526–36).[25] Cratinus's *Wine Flask* (423 B.C.E.), his riposte to Aristophanes, thematizes Cratinus's own fondness for drink and alludes explicitly to the passage from *Knights* quoted above.[26] The date of the Cratinus fragment in question is not known, but given the fact that only two plays intervene between *Acharnians* and *Wine Flask* in 423,[27] it is very likely that Cratinus's γαργαίρειν comes from one of the earlier plays of his long career and thus forms part of the background for Aristophanes' ψαμμακοσιογάργαρα.

The first half of the compound is likewise significant. According to the scholiast, it is borrowed from Eupolis' *Golden Age*: ἀριθμεῖν θεατάς ψαμμακοσίους, "counting the spectators as numerous as grains of sand."[28] This play is usually dated to the early 420s. As such, Eupolis' ψαμμακοσίους would have been a case of comic appropriation, interesting from the perspective of literary history, but not directly relevant to Aristophanes.[29] Ian Storey, however, offers convincing arguments that the evidence for such a late date for *Golden Age* is weak. He suggests, instead, that it was part of the Lenaia of 426, one year before the production of *Acharnians*. If Storey's dating is correct, the Aristophanic ne-

ologism not only responds to the text of Cratinus (and probably Aristomenes) but also to a recent play by Eupolis (Storey 1990).

Moreover, as a powerful statement of literary control, it works to the detriment of all three authors. They may be innovative and clever, but less so than Aristophanes, who is able to surpass them by bundling them into a single neologism. On the one hand, he authenticates his rivals by giving their work further public exposure in his play; on the other, they only appear at his pleasure. Aristophanes sets up his own work as possessing sufficient authority to pass upon them a final judgment for good or ill; he uses the frame of his own play—the fact that he as been given the authority to speak and not them—to show their limitations. In so doing, he makes use of the same strategy of containment that Dikaiopolis will later adopt vis-à-vis tragedy when he usurps the tragic repertoire of Euripides, then speaks approvingly to his *thumos* for having "swallowed" him (484).[30]

Again, audience competence and sympathy will affect how the scene is understood in the theater. Spectators with less retentive memories will not be conscious of its literary dimensions and will regard the allusive structure as comic background noise. Of course, some of our evidence could be incorrect or improperly applied—the scholiast could be wrong, or the date of Eupolis' play could be later (and so not part of the background of *Acharnians*). On the other hand, this background may be even more subtly employed than the present evidence allows us to conjecture. The publication of a previously unknown fragment of Crates could mean that Aristophanes' word is not a neologism at all but a specific allusion. Any change in the evidence will of necessity change the details of the interpretation. It will not invalidate my basic approach, however, which is based on the claim that the dialogical relationship between text and intertext is a crucial element in producing the pyrotechnics of Aristophanic comedy, and that that mix, however productive, is highly unstable.

Dikaiopolis, after having quantified his pleasures and pains, mixing comic literary history and tragic reminiscence, as we have seen, continues in line 4 with an introspective and conversational φέρ' ἴδω, "Let's see," a phrase that represents a stylistic turn from literate comedy to colloquial idiom.[31] This modulation contrasts strongly with the continuation of the line, which constitutes a definite "collision" of genres, to use Michael Silk's term (1993.481 and passim). Dikaiopolis searches his memory for a pleasure he experienced that was ἄξιον χαιρηδόνος, "worthy of joy." χαιρηδών appears nowhere else, and the phrase has long been suspected to derive from tragedy. Merry calls it "intention-

ally pedantic" in the style of Euripides,[32] and in the context of a play in which *Telephus* looms so large, it is tempting to see in ἄξιον χαιρηδόνος another quotation from that play.[33] The tragic provenance of the phrase is made more likely by the line that follows, which contains more tragic language: ἐγᾦδ' ἐφ' ᾧ γε τὸ κέαρ ηὐφράνθην ἰδών, "I know one thing my heart leapt at" (5). κέαρ belongs to tragedy, a fact that is emphasized by the juxtaposition of it with its linguistically more widely dispersed synonym, καρδία, in the first line.[34]

Further, the line itself is essentially synonymous with the one that precedes it, asking indirectly the same question posed directly in line 4 and contributing to Dikaiopolis' monologue only an elevation of tone and tragic associations. Finally, ἄξιον χαιρηδόνος is clearly paralleled several lines later in ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι, "It was worthy of Greece" (8), a line whose tragic provenance is suggested by its vague grandiloquence and confirmed by the scholiast as a parody of *Telephus* (Dübner 1969.2). It seems most likely, then, that ἄξιον χαιρηδόνος, too, is a quotation from tragedy, if not from *Telephus* itself, as it elevates temporarily the tone of Dikaiopolis' speech.

The lower registers of language present in the first four lines modulate upwards in the second half of line 4, whether ἄξιον χαιρηδόνος is tragic or not, and this modulation continues into line 5 with the quotation of tragedy and the adoption of an elevated tone. Tragic decorum is only partially sustained into the next line, however. Dikaiopolis answers the question he posed to himself with a nostalgic reference to the "five talents Cleon spat up" (6). Prosodically, the line contains neither resolution nor anapestic feet, and it does not violate Porson's bridge. In this sense, then, it could easily form the background for another allusion to tragedy, continuing the pattern of the previous lines. The content, however, does not correspond to this expectation. Whatever line 6 refers to, it is not tragic drama. Two interpretations are generally advanced: first, that the incident mentioned here (and in line 8) actually happened and that Dikaiopolis refers to a lawsuit of some kind prosecuted against Cleon by the Knights.[35] This view has recently been revived by Edwin Carawan, who argues for the historicity of an antagonism between Cleon and the Knights, perhaps going back to the days when he was among their number.[36] A second line of interpretation follows Lübke, who notes that all of the other events narrated by Dikaiopolis take place on stage[37] and concludes that Cleon's disgorgement of the talents took place there as well, most likely in Aristophanes' *Babylonians* of 426, which apparently concerned Cleon in some way.[38]

Whichever interpretation is true, the association of vomiting with Cleon seems to have stuck, as can be seen by the allusion at *Knights* 404, where the chorus hopes that Cleon will "throw up" the mouthful (of public dining) that he so easily acquired.[39] For the sake of the present discussion, however, the true disposition of this issue is not the most pressing matter.[40] Indeed, it is most reasonable to suppose that, unless it was *Babylonians* that dramatized Cleon's regurgitation in the previous year, the ancient audience was essentially split between versions of the two modern positions. What is most important is not the historical specificity of the reference but the productive collision between lines 5 and 6. The tragic diction and allusive structure of line 4, emphasized and repeated in line 5, is further ironized in line 6, as tragic rhythm now becomes the carrier of a clearly incongruous element, whether historical or literary. In either case, the tragic vehicle is forced to transport material far different from that for which it was designed. In so doing, it becomes an incongruous comic figure that compromises and reduces its traditional generic dignity.[41]

We have seen how lines 4–6, with their mix of tragic and literary-political diction, interact in such a way as to be mutually destabilizing. The disorder implicit in such a combination is thematic as well. Vomiting itself is a powerful expression of physical revulsion,[42] but there is a further significance to line 6 within the architecture of the play. ἐξεμεῖν, "vomit," is used later when Dikaiopolis borrows a feather from Lamachos and attempts to induce vomiting in a gesture of disgust at the general's ostentatious military costume (586). These two passages operate in parallel, for in both passages, the word is applied to characters whom Dikaiopolis disapproves of because of their bellicosity. Their structure is inverted, however. Thus while the vomiting in line 6 brings about the restoration of Cleon's ill-gotten gains, in the second example, it is Dikaiopolis' expression of immediate disgust. At the same time, the two passages conspire to create a link between Lamachos and Cleon, portraying them as "enemies of the people" whose lack of public spiritedness the city must endure.

Vomiting is also significant theoretically. In the Bakhtinian lexicon, it is a positive part of the grand tradition of carnival laughter, a tradition that emphasizes the cycle of death and rebirth graphically expressed by transformative bodily processes like eating, defecation, sex, birth, and death.[43] Within this matrix, vomiting offers a temporary reversal of the direction of the everyday process in a manner that inverts the paradigm of eating and defecating. But the direction of flow is less important than

the structural similarity of the processes. In Aristophanes' carnivalized version, the act is likewise positive. Thus Dikaiopolis rejoices at the vomiting of Cleon, which recycles his ill-gotten gains by handing them over to the Knights, and Dikaiopolis defiantly uses the feather to rid himself of everything represented by Lamachos. In both passages, vomiting indicates a change and the possibility of renovation, but on the level of political action, whether collective or individual.[44]

In more general terms, the use of ἐξεμεῖν in the opening monologue of Dikaiopolis (6) and in his later encounter with Lamachos (586) anticipates Dikaiopolis' actions later in the play, where the rejection implied by vomiting is the necessary preliminary for constructive rebirth in the configuration of Dikaiopolis' new Athens. In addition, the physicality of the act of vomiting also parallels the way in which Dikaiopolis' transformation of the polis takes place entirely on the level of the physical body, its desires, privations, and temporary satisfactions.[45] Thus in addition to whatever literary or historical resonance may be present in line 6, the reference to vomiting and its echo in the conversation with Lamachos (586) adds an important thematic dimension to the play by providing a theoretical model for the transformation Dikaiopolis hopes to effect.[46]

Lines 7 and 8 continue the reflections of Dikaiopolis concerning the discomfiture of Cleon. The comic tone is sustained by the rhythm of the lines, which both contain anapestic feet. This tone is compromised, however, by the presence of the epic-lyric word ἐγανώθην, "I rejoiced."[47] This comic-poetic fusion modulates again at the end of line 8. After the opening anapest and the prepositional phrase that continues prosaically the thought of the previous line, Dikaiopolis concludes with a quotation from Euripides' *Telephus*, ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι, part of a longer extant fragment: κακ' ὀλοίατ' ἂν ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι, "May he die evilly! It is worthy of Greece."[48]

This quotation influences *Acharnians* on several levels. On the local level, the tone shifts again, either to the simple assimilation of the tragic with no specific referent (for spectators unfamiliar with *Telephus*) or to an appropriation of Euripides' play.[49] To those familiar with *Telephus*, there is an additional ironic significance. One of the prime antagonists of *Telephus* was Achilles, who, in the passage quoted above, argued that someone (Telephus, Paris, Helen?) should be put to death. The implied relationship between the fearless Achilles and the Dikaiopolis who borrows his language appears to offer us a provisional allegory for interpreting *Acharnians*: Dikaiopolis is Achilles, who fears no one and challenges all who dare to confront him. In this reading, Dikaiopolis' hostility to-

ward Cleon is the analogue for Achilles' rage against Telephus. Thus Dikaiopolis begins the play by taking Achilles as his model, a harsh judge and a fierce defender of the public interest against all who would allow it to be compromised.

Yet Dikaiopolis' heroic cast of mind is both ridiculous—he is, after all, a simple farmer—and ironic at the same time, although in a way that will not be visible until later in the play. Despite his initial self-casting as Achilles, Dikaiopolis assumes from the beginning that intervening in the day's assembly may require more than customary persistence, and, as it turns out, he lacks the personal prestige to make himself heard at all. In fact, as far as any possible resemblance to the Telephus story goes, he has much more in common with the beggar-king, and it is to Telephus that Dikaiopolis looks to supplement his own resources, to the extent of borrowing his Telephus costume from the wardrobe of Euripides himself.

The allegorical reading of Dikaiopolis as Achilles, therefore, is not allowed to stand uncontested, and the resulting discontinuity points to an irreducible ambivalence at the heart of Aristophanes' construction of the character who represents the "just city." As a result of the Athenians' lack of interest in peace with Sparta, and of the outright hostility of the Acharnians toward his private treaty, Dikaiopolis abandons the role of the aggressor Achilles in favor of the victim Telephus. This reversal suggests a second allegorical reading in which the cause of Dikaiopolis is assimilated to that of Telephus and the Mysians, who defended their homeland against Greek aggression. In the course of the play, therefore, Dikaiopolis represents himself as both active aggressor and innocent victim, and while this incompatibility is tolerable on the level of the plot (Dikaiopolis is by nature unaggressive but, when provoked, an implacable foe), for the allegorical reading to have any force, Dikaiopolis must be either a heroic fighter like Achilles or a stay-at-home like Telephus, who only fights in self-defense.[50] The exclusive claims of each representation on the nature of Dikaiopolis are thus self-defeating, and their ironic relationship with one another points to the fundamental inability of either to serve as a paradigm for Dikaiopolis' actions.[51]

To summarize: Dikaiopolis' use of *Telephus* in line 8 casts him in the role of the violent Achilles, an image useful for Dikaiopolis, both as a vigorous opponent of the war and in his later self-representation as Aristophanes, the poet who dares to take on Cleon (377–82).[52] This role is later inverted, and Dikaiopolis becomes Telephus, who was injured by Achilles and must speak well just to survive. The incompatibility of these two representations is only revealed in the course of the play. Neverthe-

less, the two stand in an ironic relationship wherein each undermines the dramatic effectiveness of the other.

The *Telephus* quotation also throws into greater relief the incident concerning Cleon and the Knights. The tone of lines 7 and 8 is recapitulative. No additional information is presented beyond a clarification of the reason for Dikaiopolis' response. This recapitulation is emphasized by the repetitiveness of the language: τοῦτο τοὔργον (8) repeats ταῦθ' (7) and recalls ᾧ (5), as well as its antecedent τί (4), all of which refer to Cleon's now famous regurgitation. The second half of line 8, ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι, has already been mentioned both as part of the shifting allegorical vision of *Acharnians* and in the context of line 4 (ἄξιον χαιρηδόνος), with which the quotation forms a structural unit by virtue of the repetition of ἄξιον and the identical metrical placement of the two phrases. The two tragic quotations thus bracket the story about Cleon and the five talents in such a way as to be suggestive, whether the story represents an historical event or a dramatic one.

If the reference is to a literary fiction, the comic qualities of the original "event" are reprised in Aristophanes' restaging and enhanced by the tragic parody that brackets it. If, on the other hand, the incident is historical, the tragic quotations that bracket it give a sense of mock solemnity, as the level of discourse is raised with the first quotation, then lowered to describe the squalid affair of Cleon, before being raised again with the final, expansive declaration, "It was worthy of Greece!" Tragedy's position as the authoritative arbiter of justice with regard to Cleon's fate, however, is ambivalent. The dignity tragedy presupposes for itself in these two lines—i.e., the dignity that Aristophanes can implicitly suggest that it presupposes—is ironized not only by its presence in the mouth of a *comic* hero, but also by the fact that at least one of the quotations is from *Telephus*, the play that, from the perspective of *Acharnians* at least, explodes the concept of tragic dignity once and for all.[53] In this sense, the laughable, and well deserved, treatment of Cleon at the hands of the Knights is bracketed by tragic quotation not only to contrast tragic dignity with Cleon's humiliating comeuppance, but also to call that very dignity into question. Thus the assumption that the story of Cleon and the five talents is historical leads us to interpret the pair of tragic lines as both an exposé of Cleon's essential boorishness and a continuance of the attack on the reduced dignity of Euripidean tragedy.

At line 9, the literary focus of Dikaiopolis' monologue becomes more explicit. ὠδυνήθην introduces tragic poetry as an explicit source of pain for Dikaiopolis. As the scholiast notes, there is an ambivalence in

τραγῳδικόν, a word that refers both to the content of Dikaiopolis' experience (tragic drama) and to his emotional evaluation of it (a lamentable, tragic experience). In addition, the -ικον suffix suggests that the word belongs to the hip twenties vocabulary parodied by Aristophanes at *Knights* 1378–81 (Neil 1901, Dover 1987.229). ὠδυνήθην, too, has a significance that extends beyond the line, however; it recalls line 3, where the same form of the verb appears in the context of the exhausting neologism ψαμμακοσιογάργαρα. Thus Dikaiopolis introduces what he is about to say about tragic performance with an explicit echo of the comic diction—whatever its provenance—that has gone before. In short, the new "serious" element he adds will be inseparable from the nonsense that preceded it.

Dikaiopolis' specific evaluation of tragedy is likewise complicated and compromised. Dikaiopolis tells how he suffered from having to watch the frigid tragedy of Theognis when he had been waiting in the audience to see a performance of an Aeschylean tragedy. Aeschylus is not presented here as a typical tragedian, something indicated tacitly by the fact that his plays are still being staged a generation after his death (455 B.C.E.). In fact, he is introduced as "the famous Aeschylus" (τὸν Αἰσχύλον, 10), and, for Dikaiopolis, he seems to represent a Golden Age when tragedy was capable of inculcating moral values, in contrast to the degenerate moral universe embodied by Euripidean tragedy and to the reduced aesthetic possibilities offered by the frigid Theognis.[54]

Yet even the praise of Aeschylus is not without qualification. Dikaiopolis presents himself as a laughable spectacle by the mawkish enthusiasm with which he recalls "the famous Aeschylus." Further, he unself-consciously describes himself as gaping expectantly (᾽κεχήνη, 10). His choice of words is significant. Forms of χαίνω/χάσκω appear regularly in Aristophanes, and the sense is generally not complimentary. Two examples will suffice. At *Knights* 651, the Sausage-Seller describes the eager and bewildered expressions on the faces of the council members as he held out the prospect of cheap anchovies: πρὸς ἔμ᾽ ἐκεχήνεσαν, "They gaped at me." Similarly in *Clouds*, Socrates' student describes an unfortunate incident with a tree lizard, which took place while Socrates himself was "gaping upwards" at the paths and revolutions of the moon (171–72). χαίνω/χάσκω, then, describes the behavior of egghead philosophers and credulous buffoons, not that of a serious connoisseur of tragic drama. Thus Dikaiopolis' account of his expectant longing for Aeschylus does credit neither to himself nor to the playwright, for the reputation of Aeschylus is also undermined by the fact that he is the object of the uncritical adoration of spectators like Dikaiopolis.[55] In this

way, Aeschylus becomes not only the august defender of the ancestral ways but also the laughable favorite of a bumptious rustic. Dikaiopolis' unself-conscious adoration thus turns Aeschylus into a cult figure and his unique contribution to Athenian drama into a reactionary cliché.

After the self-description, with its implications for himself and, indirectly, for Aeschylus, Dikaiopolis continues his story in the third person. Merry characterizes his transition, ὁ δ' ἀνεῖπεν, "and he said" (11), as technical language introducing the formulaic invitation of the herald.[56] The formality of the transition, as well as that of the herald's call to Theognis, provides a point of contrast with what follows, as Dikaiopolis returns to a description of his personal reaction to the unexpected turn of events. Departing from the formality of the language of the herald, he adopts a more colloquial tone: πῶς τοῦτ' ἔσεισε μου δοκεῖς τὴν καρδίαν, "How do you think I felt then?" (12). πῶς δοκεῖς, "What do you think?" appears regularly in Euripides[57] and in comedy,[58] and the drop in tone caused by its appearance is further indicated by the hyperbatonic separation of πῶς and δοκεῖς, presumably as a result of Dikaiopolis' exasperation.[59] At the same time, the comic diction of the line is belied by its tragic rhythm, which gives a pompous ring to the otherwise colloquial tone and contrasts markedly with the resolved lines that introduce Dikaiopolis' anecdote (9–11).[60] Thus again the effect of Dikaiopolis' stylistic incongruity can be seen, as his frequent juxtapositions of tone, genre, diction, and rhythm ironize each other, diminishing the credibility of both Dikaiopolis and his topics.

Dikaiopolis' long catalogue of pleasures and pains concludes with two additional artistic examples and a complex set of connections that exhibit many of the same principles already seen at work in his speech. They are also of significant heuristic value, not only for understanding the text of Aristophanes but also for imagining audience reaction to references that cannot have been known to all. It is standard practice when reading ancient texts to withdraw gracefully behind the acknowledgment that allusions puzzling to us would have been well known to contemporary audiences. This is, of course, true in general, but absolute fidelity to the principle can lead us to pull up short in attempting to reconstruct the theatrical experience. In fact, many of the obscurities that we encounter in a dramatic text destined for public consumption, such as Dikaiopolis' opening speech, would have been matters of conjecture to audience members as well. They would not be privy to the jokes and rivalries well known to the theatrical insiders who regularly competed and collaborated. Instead, the audience would have been reacting on the

basis of partial familiarity with the subtext, and these varying degrees of familiarity would produce significantly different constructions about what might be funny in a given scene.

Dikaiopolis first recalls how Dexitheus came in ἐπὶ Μόσχῳ singing the Boeotian tune (13). The traditional explanation of the phrase comes from the scholiast who reads Μόσχῳ as a proper noun and explains that Moschos was a bad citherodist.[61] As a common noun, however, the word means "calf." In this context, Dikaiopolis' word choice is striking, and much to the disadvantage of the unlucky citherodist. ἐπὶ + dative is commonly used in the sense of "upon," and much less frequently as "after." The preference for this locative use of the construction over the temporal thus makes it likely that the audience briefly processes Dikaiopolis' words as "on a calf" before reinterpreting them as "after Moschos,"[62] and the effect, of course, is typical Aristophanic guilt by association, as the bovine etymology of the citherodist's name is activated and emphasized. The good name of Moschos is further compromised by his relationship with other figures in the prologue. His association with the good musician Dexitheus forms a chiastic pair with the earlier pairing of Aeschylus and Theognis. According to this construction, Aeschylus and Dexitheus would represent the noble past, Theognis and Moschos degenerate modernity.[63] Both grammar and rhetorical style thus conspire to poison the reputation of the bad musician.

A second interpretation can be posed, inconsistent with the first but perhaps contemporaneous all the same. Something very much like this line became proverbial. Rennie quotes the paroemiographer Apostolius: Μόσχος ᾄδων Βοιώτιον, "Moschos singing the ox-song."[64] The proverb itself is of considerable interest, since its similarity to Aristophanes' line is too great to be an accident, but its meaning too opposite, one would think, even to be an inaccurate paraphrase. Apostolius's own explanation of the proverb is almost entirely derived form the scholiast. He too refers to Moschos as a bad citherodist and adds that he sang ἀπνευστί, "without stopping for breath." Such an identification is unnecessary, however. Although the name Moschos is not uncommon,[65] its etymological significance ("calf") is activated by the presence of Βοιώτιον (< βοῦς, "ox"). According to this argument, it is not absolutely necessary to link the name with a specific historical figure, as the scholiast and Apostolius do, for as a proper noun, Moschos is an appropriate name for the stock figure of the countryman. Thus understood, the proverb appears to mock the rustic garrulity and unsophisticated blather typical of the "calf-boy" singing "the ox-song." Yet Aristophanes' line in *Acha-*

rnians cannot easily be morphed into the proverb reported by Apostolius, requiring as it does Dexitheus, not Moschos, to be the singer of the Boeotian gnome. It may well be, however, that instead of deriving from *Acharnians*, the proverb predates Aristophanes, and Dikaiopolis' speech deforms it by causing a well-worn bit of folk wisdom to interact grammatically and semantically with Dikaiopolis' musical anecdote.[66]

The resulting scenario would be something like this: the proverb "Moschos singing the Boeotian tune" is deformed in Aristophanes by being combined with "Dexitheus entered" (14). The result of this collision is the absurdly incongruous: "Dexitheus came in on the calf-boy singing the ox-song." On this reading, Dexitheus's performance is held up to ridicule as its excellence is generalized away, and it is joined with and compromised by the proverb's image of extreme and tedious conventionality. The complex image is enhanced still further if we accept William Starkie's suggestion that ἐπὶ μόσχῳ ποτέ is the opening line from another song that has been blended into the mix of literary history and proverbial wisdom.[67] One result of this combination of discourses would be their mutually relativizing force among audience members who cannot accept one possibility without encountering static from the others. This aspect of the image has an important consequence for the representation of Dexitheus promulgated by Dikaiopolis. His performance is ostensibly lauded by Dikaiopolis as one of the things at which he rejoiced; yet the praise directed at him is qualified by the ridiculous image of him riding on a calf that the audience is called upon to supply. This backhanded compliment parallels the treatment of Aeschylus in lines 10 and 11, where the abundant praise Dikaiopolis gives to Aeschylus is juxtaposed with his own unflattering self-presentation as an unsophisticated rustic.

These two ways of looking at the complex textuality of Moschos are also useful for imagining a non-homogeneous Aristophanic audience. In fact, the various possibilities, regardless of their competitive plausibility, mirror the responses that a diverse audience attempting to understand the allusive speech of Dikaiopolis might well have entertained: 1) both Dexitheus and Moschos are contemporary individuals; 2) Dexitheus is a contemporary, Moschos a literary quotation; 3) Dexitheus is a contemporary, Moschos from a proverb (and possibly from a quotation as well).

It is important to note here that each reading has comic potential and is, therefore, useful to the comic poet. These lines, then, are written so as to be successful in a number of ways simultaneously. Regardless of what actually happened at the performance described by Dikaiopolis, some of Aristophanes' audience may have detected a quotation, others a

fractured proverb, still others a historical rivalry. It was in the interest of a comic playwright to present a play with such converging possibilities to take advantage of the diverse abilities and experiences of the audience.[68] At the same time, his promiscuous exploitation of linguistic possibilities frequently creates incompatible interpretative scenarios.

The final example Dikaiopolis offers (15–16) is positioned so as to function as the rhetorical climax of the catalogue. It does this in two ways: first, by evoking recent history last (τῆτες), it suggests that the succession of topics in Dikaiopolis' speech has been a chronological progression from past to present injustice (van Leeuwen 1901.10). In fact, with the introduction of the final stage, the pain Dikaiopolis feels at the sight of the empty Pnyx (19–20), his narrative enters the present. Second, it is the only incident cited by Dikaiopolis that he does not introduce with a verb of pleasure or pain—suggesting a qualitative difference from the introductory catalogue. Moreover, although the reaction of Dikaiopolis to Chairis is colorfully described, its purport is nevertheless ambiguous. It is never absolutely clear whether Dikaiopolis actively *likes* or *dislikes* Chairis, a fact that further distances the final anecdote from the dialectic of pleasure and pain that precedes it (for Chairis, see Olson 2002.71).

In fact, the final example contrasts markedly with the highly literary examples that precede it. Although the general context is still modern art, here the aesthetic qualities of the performance are almost entirely secondary to the comical physical actions of both performers and audience (represented by Dikaiopolis' self-description). The specific content of the performance is restricted to a short prepositional phrase (ἐπὶ τὸν ὄρθιον, "playing the Orthian tune," 16), as opposed to the contortions of the two principals, Dikaiopolis and Chairis, which are described more emphatically by individual finite verbs. Dikaiopolis begins by describing his own response. "I died from squinting" (15), he says, borrowing a term from medical language.[69] Clearly the comment is uncomplimentary, but what does Dikaiopolis' own physical attitude reveal? If he is bored while eagerly anticipating the appearance of Chairis, his fidgeting anticipates the indecorous catalogue of actions he will later perform while waiting for the arrival of the Prytanes (30–31).[70] διεστράφην, "I was twisted," however, can also suggest active avoidance (as at *Knights* 175), and the violence of his movement appears to resonate (if bathetically) with his hyperbolic claim to have died (ἀπέθανον, 15).[71]

In this way, then, the audience is presented with a description of Dikaiopolis' reaction to Chairis that is extremely ambiguous, with features pointing in opposing directions. This ambiguity shifts the focus of the

lines back on Dikaiopolis, who emerges as a representative of physical comedy, and whose contortions were no doubt represented in some detail by the actor who played him. No longer even a comical connoisseur of art, the movements of his body are emphatically described, even before the context of the performance and the cause of his gyrations have been revealed.[72]

In the absence of any significant description of Chairis' performance, his physical attributes also occupy center stage. His entrance to sing the Orthian tune is characterized by his stooping (16), which, by deviating from normal posture, is intrinsically comic, as it draws attention to the body as a physical object.[73] In addition, however, Dikaiopolis' use of παρακύπτειν, "bend to the side," to describe the movements of Chairis activates the literal sense of ὄρθιον, "upright," just as, in the previous section, the etymological sense of μόσχῳ was activated by βοιώτιον. In this context, the Orthian tune, so called from the *high* pitch with which it was sung, becomes a "straight tune." This inappropriate straightness, in turn, contrasts explicitly with Chairis' stooped posture. "Bent" over the "straight tune," Chairis becomes a walking contradiction.

Thus in the final tableau, both Dikaiopolis and Chairis present laughable *spectacles* that overwhelm the content of any artistic performance. Aspects of this physical comedy also connect with the larger concerns of the play in important, if contradictory, ways. The contortions of Dikaiopolis prefigure in part the impatience with which he awaits his appearance at the assembly, the failure of which is the motive force behind his decision to recreate the city of Athens on the level of his family. Yet the text also seems to suggest some continuity in the character of Dikaiopolis, whose largely critical reaction to modern art parallels his rejection of the modern city. In both cases, the conclusion is the same but arrived at by following contradictory assumptions regarding Dikaiopolis' attitude toward Chairis.

Dikaiopolis' opening speech dramatizes on a small scale the conflicts that structure the play as a whole. What presents itself as an unambiguous critique of modern art turns out to be fatally flawed in such a way as to draw attention from the virtues of antiquity (represented by Aeschylus) and redirect it to the modest qualifications of the speaker (the rustic Dikaiopolis). In the same way, on the level of plot, a unified critical attack on Athenian political-military policy toward Sparta is diluted on the level of language by a multi-faceted discourse composed of a large number of mutually destabilizing parts. This complex includes the ambivalent representation of the Athenian artistic scene in the pro-

logue, but the ambivalence continues throughout the play, with Euripides as both the debaser of tragic dignity and the savior of Dikaiopolis' private fortune, as well as with the "new Athens" created by Dikaiopolis as a substitute for the Athens he rejects that nevertheless retains the institutional structure of the original city (the procession of the Rural Dionysia, boundary stones, and market officials). Through it all runs Euripides' *Telephus*, whose hero is assimilated inconsistently to Dikaiopolis, to Cleon, and to Lamachos, and thus contributes importantly to the climate of ambivalence that develops in the course of the play.

The variant trajectories of these effects cannot be explained away with references to jokes that are serious (based on Aristophanes' real opinion) and jokes that are not (simply funny and, therefore, causing no disruption to Aristophanes' ideological program). Despite its unambiguously anti-war plot, therefore, *Acharnians* is not simply a quietist peace play, although the conflicts animating Athenian society in the mid 420s and beyond certainly made peace exploitable. Nor is the play just an expression of oligarchic views on the irresponsibility of the democratic populace, since both Dikaiopolis, the critic of democratic politics, and the old Acharnians who confront him are frequent comic targets whose rehabilitation is never attempted. Instead, the ambivalence and inconsistency of the play produce comic situations, the effects of which are self-annihilating and often vary according to the experiences and biases of the different audience groups. These aspects of Aristophanic comedy produce a situation where everything is contested, as the winners of the countless mini-agons are later themselves discomfited and deprived of their superior status and absolute claim to authority.

These are precisely the effects attributed in Bakhtin's history of laughter to carnivalization, the radicalized version of carnival that reworks its formal structure and grotesque realism on a literary plane.[74] The result of this reworking is a short-term loss of comedy's potential to create for the duration of the festival a counterforce to the world of official culture (in the spirit of the popular-culture phenomenon of the carnival). In the long term, however, carnivalization produces a gain for comedy, which is thereby freed from the narrow orthodoxy of opposition politics by its relentlessly undermining spirit that pits competing discourses against each other in such a way as to leave the results of the contest ambivalent and unfinalizable, to use Bakhtin's term.[75] This pan-critical approach, whatever the opinions of the historical Aristophanes, produces diverse effects at multiple levels of his work. It will be the task of the following chapters to attempt to give a sense of their ubiquitous diversity.

2 The Failed Programs of *Clouds*

> Within the arena of almost every utterance an intense interaction and struggle between one's own and another's word is being waged, a process within which they oppose or dialogically interanimate each other.—Mikhail Bakhtin

The literary dialogism of Dikaiopolis' prologue in *Acharnians* offers a variety of interpretative possibilities to Aristophanes' various audiences. In *Clouds*, we find the same processes at work. Yet while other literature, particularly tragic poetry, continues to exercise a powerful symbolic role in *Clouds*—both in the development of the plot and in the articulation of Aristophanes' aesthetic program—it is not emphasized to the same degree as in *Acharnians*. In its place is the economic tension that drives the action of the play: the differences between the frugal Strepsiades, a man who has begun to watch his hoarded wealth disappear, and his horse-loving son, whose expensive hobby is encouraged by Strepsiades' intemperate, aristocratic wife.

The primary struggle in this situation should perhaps be between the two social classes involved: relatively wealthy peasants with no social prominence, represented by Strepsiades, and aristocrats whose expectations have not adjusted to their diminished wealth (see Dover 1968. xxix–xxx and Konstan 1995). Indeed, although the pompous self-assertion of the aristocratic class is mocked in the play, this conflict is elided into one that is less explosive, the clash between generations. Here Aristophanes follows a familiar path, most notably the course of his own *Banqueters*, a play described in the *Clouds parabasis* as about ὁ σώφρων τε χὠ καταπύγων, "the moderate (boy) and the dissolute (one)" (529).[1] At

the same time, the play differs markedly from *Banqueters* in its focus on rhetorical education and the prominence given to Socrates, whether he is understood as a generic Sophist or as an historical figure.[2]

Central to the play is the contest between rival educational philosophies, represented by ὁ κρείττων λόγος, literally "the stronger argument," and ὁ ἥττων λόγος, "the weaker argument." I shall follow the practice of Kenneth Dover (1968.lvii–lviii), by referring to them simply as "Right" and "Wrong," thus avoiding wordiness in a translation that will appear frequently. The reason for the contest is to decide which of the *logoi* will undertake to educate Pheidippides in the art of rhetoric. The decision is never really in doubt, however, as Strepsiades is seeking a way to avoid repaying his creditors from the very beginning of the play (98–99), and he restates his intention in his final instructions to Socrates that Pheidippides should learn both arguments, unless that proves impossible, in which case he should at least learn Wrong (882–85). Such a bias on the part of Strepsiades, together with the evident antinomian orientation of the *phrontisterion* (95–99), would appear to doom Right's cause in advance. Nevertheless, the debate is decided along other lines and with more far-reaching consequences, as Wrong not only persuades Strepsiades to entrust Pheidippides to himself, but also forces his opponent to capitulate and come over to his side.

The scenes following the agon detail the consequences of this victory for Strepsiades and his family. The chorus of Clouds, who had previously been represented as the paradigm of the rhetorical with their infinite mutability (340–55), metamorphose into defenders of the old theodicy, reconfigured, they hope, to justify their place within it.[3] Although officially impartial in the agon, they approve of the beating that Strepsiades receives at the hands of his amoral son, trained by Wrong (1454–61), and explicitly support Strepsiades' decision to set fire to the *phrontisterion* of Socrates, the great perverter of traditional values (1508–09).

I will argue that the evident one-sidedness of the agon is brought about by the differing rhetorical styles of Right and Wrong. Right, able to sound only a single note about the superiority of the past, is unable to meet the objections of Wrong, who is able both to exploit the implications of Right's argument and, when it suits him, to contest it altogether. In their different approaches, the two arguments illustrate well Bakhtin's distinction between monologism and dialogism. Right is locked into a monological view of language exemplified by his fondness for moral absolutes and ex cathedra pronouncements, while Wrong's consciousness of the dialogic workings of language leaves him plenty of room

for outmaneuvering his rival. Wrong's victory in the agon, however, is short-lived, and in the final scenes, it becomes clear that he has been a tool of the Clouds, used to entrap Strepsiades, whose love of evil deeds (1459) finds its appropriate recompense. Thus a fuller interpretation of the agon shows the victory of Wrong, however spectacular, to have been illusory. Yet the Clouds do not emerge from this process unscathed either, as their representation at the beginning of the play renders them comic figures. Their eventual metamorphosis, while effective for bringing about Strepsiades' recognition of his wrongdoing (1462–66), only partly recovers the dignity that is forfeited early on.[4]

The preceding summary, which concentrates on the mutually destabilizing presences of Right and Wrong, father and son, human and divine, especially within the agon, reflects clearly the importance of these conflicts for *Clouds*. But their centrality should not be emphasized to the exclusion of other forces at work in the comedy. Carnivalized genres typically function by elevating an object then proceeding to undermine, expose, or "uncrown" it.

I will illustrate how such forces work by concentrating on two examples that both augment and help to relativize the central themes of *Clouds*. The first concerns a certain Megacles son of Megacles, referred to by Strepsiades in his autobiographical monologue (46). This reference suggests comic vectors quite separate from those of the agon, and attention to it helps to illuminate some of the competing forces at work. The second object of my attention is the Cloud chorus, specifically the contradictory aspects of their presentation (especially their diction) that undermine their evident *semnotes*, "haughtiness" (291, 364; cf. cognate σέβομαι, "revere," 293). This analysis illustrates the process by which even the "reduced laughter" of indirect comic characterization can directly contribute to the development of the play. A discussion of the incongruous presence of "lyric alpha" in the chorus' *parodos* thus contributes to a characterization of the Cloud chorus as a whole and, in turn, has important implications for the agon and its complex interactions between Right, Wrong, and the Clouds.

Dover comments on ἔγημα Μεγακλέους τοῦ Μεγακλέους (*Clouds* 46) as follows: "A real Megacles son of Megacles was one of the treasurers of Athena in 428/7 . . . but it is unlikely that Aristophanes means us to think of his fictitious hero as married to the niece of an actual person. The whole point is that 'Megacles' is a grandiloquent name . . ." (1968.99).

The name Megacles was quite common in Athens, especially among the family of the Alcmeonids.[5] The grandfather of Alcibiades had the

name, and it is probably he who is mentioned by Pindar (*Pythian* 7.13–17) as a five-time winner. An earlier Olympic victor bearing the same name was a contemporary of Cylon. The son of Cleisthenes the legislator was also named Megacles.[6] Thus in writing this name into the family history of Strepsiades, Aristophanes can expect the audience to have some familiarity with the name and to associate it with the activities of prominent Athenians.

The name, of course, has other, etymological, connotations. Its major component is mega-, "great," and would suggest to anyone unfamiliar with the name, perhaps foreigners attending the City Dionysia, a typically self-important grandee. "Megacles," then, would have been expected to conjure up both specific and unspecific associations for an audience, its bearers either members of an extremely prominent family (in the minds of informed Athenians) or bearers of a fictitious name invented to suggest pomposity (as perceived by others). In both cases, the comic value of the name remains, whether audience members believe that Strepsiades is referring to a real person or not.[7]

Moreover, the fact that a Megacles son of Megacles *was* actually prominent in Athenian civic life at the time of *Clouds* (unless he died between the treasurership in 428–27 and the production of the play) means that for a third, socially prominent, section of the audience, this line referred not to a generic aristocrat but to a real person, a contemporary and, presumably, a rival. For these, the self-important grandeur suggested by the double mega- in the name and patronym of someone they know, especially in the context of the description of the comic extravagance of the niece that follows (47–55), does not ridicule aristocratic pretension in general. Instead, the abuse is specific and personal, titillating to the schadenfreude of Megacles the Treasurer's peers.

The pleasure experienced by the section of audience familiar with Megacles the Treasurer does not tell us anything concerning the actual characteristics of the Megacles in question. Was he self-important or, perhaps, the opposite, and Strepsiades' remark a laughably incongruous inuendo? We are not in a position to know, but comic attacks do not rely on fairness for their effectiveness, and in this case, the name itself provides sufficient comic possibilities on its own, in the manner of comic pseudo-names like Paphlagon in *Knights* (from παφλάζειν, "boil").

These possibilities (as well as the ones offered by the generic Alcmeonid associations of the name) also have interesting implications for that part of the audience who perceive Megacles son of Megacles *not* as an acquaintance but as just the sort of pompous aristocrat type imagined

by Dover in his commentary on the line. That is to say, this audience's assumption that Megacles (the Treasurer) is a stereotypical aristocrat can contribute to the general amusement of other audience members in the know. That Aristophanes can count on this sort of erroneous interpretation thus allows the reference to go beyond generic mockery and to function secondarily as an attack on the historical person, whose unique and prominent stature in the city is reduced to a caricature of aristocratic arrogance.[8] If, in addition, the aforementioned Megacles is unassuming and conscientious, the joke is improved for both his admirers and adversaries, as the inappropriateness of the representation heightens the sense of contrast between his putative and actual character.[9]

Thus the line in question, like many jokes in Aristophanes, works in several different ways that reinforce each other. The joke can be understood at various levels of specificity as a reference to "big shots" in general, to the Alcmeonids as a dynasty exhibiting typical aristocratic pride, and as a stand-alone piece of indirect invective directed at Megacles the Treasurer. Each interpretation serves the same general end: to mock the attitudes of prominent aristocrats. To a part of the audience, however, there is more,[10] and, for them, Megacles is a friend, an acquaintance, and a rival, at whose expense Aristophanes can titillate an elite constituency while still playing to the crowd.[11]

Discussion of another passage in Dover's commentary will allow us to see in *Clouds* some of the same dialogic machinery that we observed in *Acharnians* and to consider briefly a dialectal phenomenon not always associated with comedy. Dover notes four cases in the *parodos* where lyric alpha is retained in place of Attic eta,[12] concluding, however, that "this is unusual in comedy, except for humorous parodic effect (e.g. 30, 1154 f.), which is out of the question here" [that is, 275–90].[13]

A look at Dover's instances of dialectal forms that *do* create a "humorous parodic effect" is critical for understanding his decision not to interpret the lyric alphas of the Cloud chorus as indicative of anything in particular. The phrase turns out to be reserved for examples that exhibit a complex relationship with their models (in both cases tragic). In fact, a closer examination of Dover's examples shows them to possess important and interesting intertextual connections. It is true that the lyric alphas of the *Clouds parodos* do not exhibit the same complex characteristics as Dover's examples, nor, indeed, of many other passages in Aristophanes.[14] It is my contention, nevertheless, that the *Clouds*' lyric alphas contribute, if by small increments, to the "carnival of genres" that make up Aristophanic comedy. The kind of "reduced laughter" present

here is always in danger of being neglected in the midst of broad, physical comedy and exquisitely focused parody. Even so, it, too, has a part to play in the creation of this comedy's comprehensive comic effects.[15]

The first humorous, parodic form cited by Dover is from the opening monologue of Strepsiades. As Strepsiades ruminates about his debts, he asks himself: ἀτὰρ τί χρέος ἔβα με μετὰ τὸν Πασίαν; "What debt came upon me after Pasias?" (30). The line is strongly marked as a quotation by the presence of the poetic forms ἔβα and χρέος (for Attic ἔβη and χρέως). It is further identified by the scholiast as a line from Euripides (1011 N^2). Its comic effect arises in part from the incongruence of tragic language in the mouth of the rustic Strepsiades, but also from the fact that he uses χρέος in the specifically Attic sense of "debt"—as opposed to the more generic tragic sense of "affair."

Thus the line serves as an example of the principle discussed in Chapter 1 by which parodic quotation of one genre by another (and in particular of tragedy by comedy) has the effect of undercutting both the deliverer of tragic speech and the source—here Euripides.[16] This double effect is visible in the passage under consideration. Through his (mis-) use of Euripides' χρέος, Strepsiades suggests his misunderstanding of a play at which he was presumably a spectator and thereby contributes to his development as a laughable character. At the same time, his ludicrous mistake also travesties Euripidean tragedy by treating it as though it had been developed for accounting purposes.[17]

Dover's second example again has literary antecedents. Having received Socrates' report on the progress of Pheidippides after his instruction by Wrong, Strepsiades sings a victory song, tragic in character, beginning with the following: βοάσομαί τἄρα τὰν ὑπέρτονον βοάν, "Truly I shall shout loudly" (1154–55). Alpha is retained over Attic eta in both the verb βοάσομαι and its cognate accusative βοάν. Parody is assumed. The scholia suggest sources: 1) Sophocles' *Peleus*, 2) Euripides' *Peleus*, or 3) Phrynichus's *Satyrs*.[18]

Hypotheses 1 and 2 are similarly interesting possibilities. Both represent the interaction of comedy with a tragedy in such a way that the status of tragic thought and expression is diminished while the comic character—here Strepsiades—is even more laughable for his elevated language. Further, *Peleus*, be it Sophocles' or Euripides', has a special resonance within *Clouds*, for an allusion to the Peleus story occupies a central place in the debate between Right and Wrong, and it, along with the entire didactic mythological tradition, is subjected to a scathing critique that is nowhere rebutted in the play.[19] Thus Strepsiades' quotation

of *Peleus* (whatever version) in his speech of victory ironically foreshadows the humiliating punishment he is compelled to undergo later for his wrongdoing (1454–61).[20]

These two examples of dialectical marking in the text of *Clouds* occupy a distinct place (if not quite recoverable today) within the literary tradition of fifth-century Athens and resonate fully with the concerns of the play. The lyric alphas of the *Clouds parodos* speak with a much fainter voice. Nevertheless, subtler effects are appreciable as well. Let us consider the representation of the chorus in the light of both its entry and its subsequent development. By so doing, we shall find that, despite the fact that the sound of their voices is ἱερὸν καὶ σεμνὸν καὶ τερατῶδες (364), "holy, august, and portentous" (to the ears of Strepsiades anyway), much is done by the poet to present them as laughable.[21]

The presence of elevated language in the *parodos* means, in part, that the chorus is allowed to represent itself as though it were the chorus of a tragedy. I have argued that the mere placement of tragic language in the mouth of a comic character is sufficient to dialogize the dramatic situation in two ways: tragedy is mocked by the inappropriate deployment of its diction, and individual comic figures are made to sound pompous and overreaching. These effects are heightened here, as the first entry of the chorus of Clouds means that the audience's attention is focused on them more intently than anywhere else in the play.[22]

The loftiness of their speech, to which the lyric alphas contribute, along with the high degree of responsion between strophes and the dactylic sequences within which the alphas occur[23] are likely to have contrasted explicitly with the appearance of the chorus, however they may have been represented. Lines 323–55 are our only indication as to what the chorus may have looked like. Strepsiades, who previously had thought that clouds were mist and smoke, wonders why the Clouds look like mortal women (341–42). At any rate, they are like no clouds he has ever seen (342).

Yet the entry of the chorus does not appear to be without visual effects, as seems clear from Strepsiades' remark to Socrates, αὗται δὲ ῥῖνας ἔχουσιν, "These women have noses" (344). The scholiast suggests that the chorus wore masks dominated by grotesque noses, which possibility, if true, would suggest a vertical displacement of the comic phallus (Dübner 1969.99). The scholiast's interpretation, of course, may be no more than an inference from the text, but it may well be correct, in which case the elevated lyricism of the chorus' *parodos* will have been undermined by the spectacle of their physical appearance.[24]

Such diction also serves as a foil for the characterization of the Clouds as a whole, contrasting the elevated language with which they enter with the evidently low company they keep (331–34):

οὐ γὰρ μὰ Δί' οἶσθ' ὁτιὴ πλείστους αὗται βόσκουσι σοφιστάς,
Θουριομάντεις, ἰατροτέχνας, σφραγιδονυχαργοκομήτας,
κυκλίων τε χορῶν ἀσματοκάμπτας ἄνδρας μετεωροφένακας,
οὐδὲν δρῶντας βόσκουσ' ἀργούς, ὅτι ταύτας μουσοποιοῦσιν.

No, by Zeus, don't you know that these (goddesses) nourish many sophists,
Thurian prophets, doctors, signet-ringed, manicured, long-haired,
lazybones?
And they nourish the song-benders for the circular choruses, who prattle
through the middle air,
Lazy men, doing nothing, because these men make songs about them.

According to Socrates, the devotees of the Clouds are divided into two groups: the so-called "skilled men," who turn out to be a mixture of oracle-mongers, quacks, and idle youth, on the one hand, and dithyrambic poets, on the other. Beyond their allegiance to the Clouds, the two groups are united by an incapacity for productive labor and by their essential laziness; as such, each group does little more than diminish the stature of its patrons, the chorus.

This aspect of the chorus' portrayal is noted by Raymond Fisher, who calls attention to the alternation between solemn and prosaic speech that precedes the *parodos* (e.g., ἐπίδειξιν, 269) and sees the entrance of the chorus compromised from the beginning (1984.89). He concludes that it is impossible to hear their song as "serious poetry" and remarks of such sententious passages that they are funny "precisely because they are 'serious passages' in a comic context."[25]

Similar comic incongruities appear when the chorus addresses Socrates as λεπτοτάτων λήρων ἱερεῦ, "priest of the most subtle blathering" (359), then explains that they would listen to none of the present-day *meteorosophistai*, "middle-air sophists," before Socrates except Prodicus[26] (361–63):

τῷ μὲν σοφίας καὶ γνώμης οὕνεκα, σοὶ δέ,
ὅτι βρενθύει τ' ἐν ταῖσιν ὁδοῖς καὶ τὠφθαλμὼ παραβάλλεις,
κἀνυπόδητος κακὰ πόλλ' ἀνέχει κἀφ' ἡμῖν σεμνοπροσωπεῖς.

to him because of this wisdom and his good sense, but to you
Because you swagger in the streets and cast your eyes around
And endure many evils and you address us in a solemn fashion.

The association of the Clouds with spurious speech in the evocation of Thurian purveyors of oracles, quack doctors, and dithyrambic poets is continued here in the address to Socrates, a "priest of the most subtle blathering."[27] We again find the Clouds associating not with the best of Athenian society, as their pompous diction in the *parodos* might imply,[28] but with an odd band of charlatans who perform no useful work.[29]

The dubious nature of Cloud-speak is clear in the *parodos*. Dover describes their reference to the sun as "aether's bright eye" (ὄμμα γὰρ αἰθέρος, 285) as a poetic cliché, and Silk criticizes the originality of the lyrics throughout the play.[30] Even more telling, however, is their description of Athens as λιπαρὰν χθόνα Παλλάδος, "bright land of Pallas" (300). On the surface, the description is unremarkable, and we would be content to label it a cliché of the same order as "aether's bright eye" were we not uncommonly well informed as to how it should be interpreted. As it turns out, λιπαρός in Aristophanes has a history sufficient to endow it with an important synecdochic significance. In *Acharnians* (425 B.C.E.), the chorus develops in the *parabasis* a meta-narrative in which they attribute to Aristophanes the opinion (φήσιν, 633)[31] that his comedy has taught the Athenians to resist the allure of rhetorical seductions, contrasting their recent credulity with their new critical awareness (636–40):

> πρότερον δ' ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων οἱ πρέσβεις ἐξαπατῶντες
> πρῶτον μὲν ἰοστεφάνους ἐκάλουν· κἀπειδὴ τοῦτό τις εἴποι,
> εὐθὺς διὰ τοὺς στεφάνους ἐπ' ἄκρων τῶν πυγιδίων ἐκάθησθε.
> εἰ δέ τις ὑμᾶς ὑποθωπεύσας λιπαρὰς καλέσειεν Ἀθήνας,
> ηὕρετο πᾶν ἂν διὰ τὰς λιπαράς, ἀφύων τιμὴν περιάψας.
>
> Previously, the ambassadors from the cities used to deceive you.
> First of all, they called you "violet-crowned," and whenever someone said this
> You would sit right up on the tip of your butts on account of the crowns.
> And if someone in flattery should call you "bright Athens,"
> He'd have gotten it all by saying "bright," having covered you with the honor
> reserved for anchovies.

Thus with *Acharnians* (two years before the production of *Clouds*), λιπαρός enters the Aristophanic lexicon as the emblem of the transparent flattery typically used by fawning orators to gain the knee-jerk approval of the Athenian assembly.[32] The putative immunity of the new,

Aristophanes-educated demos is not beyond question, however, at least on the literary plane. In 424 B.C.E. (*Knights*), Aristophanes puts the same epithet into the mouth of the chorus, who, awaiting the appearance of the rejuvenated city of Athens, cry out: ὦ ταὶ λιπαραὶ καὶ ἰοστέφανοι καὶ ἀριζήλωτοι Ἀθῆναι, "Oh bright and violet-crowned and most enviable Athens" (1329).

In this passage, two key words that marked the chorus' metanarrative in *Acharnians* recur (λιπαρός and ἰοστέφανοι), together with their use by a speaker whose manifest interest is flattery. The *Knights* chorus' words clearly interact with Aristophanes' self-serving boast in *Acharnians*—both comically undermining Aristophanic braggadocio and pointing to the continuation of business as usual: the demos of Athens is always the recipient of self-interested flattery. The reappearance in *Knights* of λιπαρός and ἰοστέφανοι, clearly proscribed from credible public speech the year before, identifies each term as synecdochic for the tactics of deceptive speakers who play upon the vanity of the Athenian populace.[33]

With these associations in mind, we may return to the words of Aristophanes' *Clouds* (423 B.C.E.) to see that the chorus' characterization of Athens as the λιπαρὰν χθόνα Παλλάδος is not merely a poetic cliché but a piece of self-subverting rhetoric with rich intertextual associations. For the second year in a row, Aristophanes makes use of the joke he set up in *Acharnians*, as the mere appearance of λιπαρός, especially in reference to Athens before an Athenian audience, is sufficient to activate the previous significance of the epithet and tacitly to discredit the Clouds as deceptive panderers.[34]

Aristophanes' characterization of the Cloud chorus is, of course, less developed than that of a major figure like Strepsiades, whose vulgarity and persistent misunderstanding of the situations in which he finds himself, together with his surprising resilience, make him the focus of pity, contempt, and grudging admiration. By contrast, the laughableness of the Clouds is far more subdued. As in the discussion of Megacles son of Megacles, however, paying attention to the reduced laughter of Aristophanic language makes its polyfunctionality visible. We are thereby able to identify aspects that are significant, but which do not have the same broad literary resonance as, say, Strepsiades' misuse of Euripides' χρέως.[35]

The Clouds eventually become the agents of destruction for Strepsiades when they reveal their true allegiance to the *nomoi*, "laws," of the city, as well as their predilection for teaching evildoers to fear the gods

(1454–61).[36] Within that grand scheme, however, the Clouds themselves are a comic character like any other, travestying the language of tragedy even as they are travestied by the contrast between their pretensions and the dubious quality of their associates. And, according to Aristophanes, they are not averse to the tired rhetorical formulae of speakers seeking to flatter the Athenian assembly.

We have examined a number of passages to show how the techniques Bakhtin developed to describe the interaction of different genres within the modern novel are effective tools for describing the myriad juxtapositions of language levels that make up Aristophanic comedy and their tendency to undermine with laughter even aspects of Athenian cultural life of which the poet might have approved.[37] From this perspective, the *Clouds* agon offers an especially rich field in which to work, for the confrontation between Wrong and Right replicates almost exactly the distinction Bakhtin makes between dialogical and monological tendencies within the speech genres that structure the linguistic exchanges of classes and individuals.[38] It therefore enacts a confrontation between just those dialogical aspects of Aristophanic language that we have been emphasizing: speech that can be presented as stilted, stereotypical, and disseminated monologically *ex cathedra*, on the one hand, and the forces that seek to undercut these types of discourse by means of parody, irony, and direct ridicule.

Of course no discourse is truly monological inasmuch as all speech exists in a historical context that must include voices, both tacit and explicit, of an "other." Monologism is, instead, a rhetorical tactic, which may or may not be conjoined with physical or politico-juridicial power, as in the cases of bullies, ranters, and legislators. Because of its lack of interest in any response that does not mirror it, monologism is badly suited to the persuasion of an audience whose adherence cannot be compelled by appeals to force or to perceived ideological allegiances, especially an audience regularly called upon to exercise critical judgment upon the words of others. Indeed, the audience Aristophanes professes to cultivate is precisely the sort of audience least likely to be swayed by a character's monological style of presentation and most likely to regard such a character ironically and with amusement. Further, the diversity of the audience and its pretensions to independence make it difficult for characters to appeal to ideological attitudes sufficiently basic to compel assent.

It is no surprise, then, that in Aristophanes, the monologic impulse is found in characters who are especially to be seen as objects of ridi-

cule and whose inflexible ideas are subject to comic scrutiny. Rhetorical power lies instead in the hands of those who deploy more comprehensive language resources, and who are thereby able to outflank and confute their opponents. It is for this reason that characters such as Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians* and Wrong in *Clouds* have much in common with Aristophanes himself in his relationship with tragedy, as both the comic poet and his characters exploit the resources of a more comprehensive language to the detriment of a rival who can be represented, at least rhetorically in the case of tragedy, as inflexible and limited.[39]

At the same time, there is no absolute position from which to attack with impunity, and for this reason, those who deploy dialogic resources effectively are no less susceptible to their centrifugal effects. All the characters in *Clouds* find their authority substantially eroded by the end of the play. Right is altogether ridiculous, and his defeat in the agon produces few tears. Wrong, despite his victory, turns out to have been a pawn of the Clouds. They support him in the agon and pander to his vanity, but the results are evanescent. He does not appear again after the agon, and the misfortune that comes upon Strepsiades as a result of his teaching, as well as the destruction of his patron Socrates and of the *phrontisterion*, all serve to leverage Wrong away from the central position he appears to occupy after the defection of Right. Having been used by the Clouds to punish Strepsiades and to further their own ends, Wrong is left to linger on the vine without prestige or honor.

The Clouds themselves might appear to come out well on the level of the plot, but their reputation, so thoroughly tarnished early in the play, is not rehabilitated simply by their assertion of allegiance to traditional theodicy in the matter of Strepsiades' guilt and punishment (1458–61), nor is their reactionary stance easily compatible with the predilection for mimesis they display earlier in the play (348–50). Finally, their attempt to secure admission to the Athenian pantheon (575–94) is ignored completely in the course of the play's action, and for all of their smugness regarding the punishment of Strepsiades, they end the play no better off than they were when it began. The result of these interactions is, as in *Acharnians*, a situation in which none of the protagonists are left untarred, and in which no claim is made that is not circumscribed or relativized in some way. We are thus presented with a situation that is doubly dialogized. In the end, the contest between Right and Wrong is no contest because of Right's inability to counter the broad perspective of Wrong. At the same time, the larger ironic structure of the play renders all participants, Wrong included, targets of comic scorn.

The battle of the two *logoi* in *Clouds* draws on the ability of Wrong to cast Right's pronouncements within a broader dialogic context composed of contemporary linguistic and textual possibilities. Right predicts that he will be victorious "by speaking just things" (900).[40] This remark prompts his adversary to declare: ἀλλ' ἀνατρέψω ταῦτ' ἀντιλέγων, "But speaking against these [just] things, I will overturn you" (901; cf. 941–44, 1040).[41] Wrong makes no specific claims about either education or the "good old days." He is not content passively to mirror Right, however, and by exploiting his rhetorical assessment of contemporary Athens, he draws out its implications to their logical ends.

The basis of Right's case is the superiority of antiquity over a degenerate present. He begins by contradicting the claim that the γνώμας καινάς, "new ideas" (896), Wrong intends to make use of are wise:[42] ταῦτα γὰρ ἀνθεῖ διὰ τουτουσὶ τοὺς ἀνοήτους, he mutters, gesturing to the audience ("This is what flourishes among these half-wits," 897–98). He appeals to the ancient authority of the gods (902, 904a), and he implicitly condemns modernity by referring to an earlier period in which the antics of Wrong would have provoked serious punishment (913).[43]

This hankering for the old continues to be expressed in the agon proper. He refers to his present task as expounding the ἀρχαίαν παιδείαν, "old education" (961), which he will later claim produced the men who fought at Marathon (986). He goes on to elaborate how boys behaved in the old days, contrasting them explicitly with today's youth (οἱ νῦν, 971) and adding a series of counterfactual clauses documenting erotic and culinary offenses that would never have occurred in the past (977–83). He continues his presentation with a direct appeal to Pheidippides and a series of moral particulars, from the evils of a warm bath to the negative effects of agora gossiping. He concludes by exhorting his would-be student to respect older men. In particular, they must not be referred to by uncomplimentary epithets like "Iapetos," the father of Prometheus, and hence one of the oldest beings in the universe (991–99; Taillardat 1965.262).

Right's style of presentation seals his fate. Wrong need only exploit the rhetorical inflexibility of his rival to undermine utterly both him and the authority of antiquity. This defeat, while not immediately fatal to Right's cause, nevertheless prefigures his eventual collapse and leaves him without a credible position from which to criticize the present.

Unlike Right, whose presentation is consistent, if monochromatic, Wrong proceeds in two ways. On the one hand, he absolutely contests the ground upon which Right stands, particularly his identification of

the good with the old and ancestral. He derisively calls Right "Kronos" (929), a term with special resonance given the allusion to Iapetos mentioned above and the reference to the Hesiodic succession myth, quoted below. On the other hand, he uses a chain of inferences based on the premises of Right to deflate his opponent's claims by exposing contradictions within them. These two approaches, although proceeding from incompatible assumptions, complement each other effectively. The direct contradictions and ad hominem attacks of Wrong incite Right to remain faithful to the letter of his prior convictions, thus allowing the contradictions that eventually come to light to have even more deadly effects.

Ostensibly, Wrong structures his argument as a mirror to that of Right, despite the fact that his claim to superiority lies in his ability to come up with "new ideas." Picking up on the Right's intention to speak τὰ δίκαια, "just things" (900), he denies the existence of the goddess Δίκη, "Justice" (902). Wrong justifies himself by appeal to the well-known injustice of Zeus (904b–906):

> πῶς δῆτα Δίκης οὔσης ὁ Ζεὺς
> οὐκ ἀπόλωλεν τὸν πατέρ' αὐτοῦ
> δήσας;
>
> If Justice exists, why didn't Zeus perish after he tied up his father?[44]

The story of the succession myth to which Wrong alludes, and of the imprisonment of Kronos in Tartarus, was, of course, told in Hesiod's *Theogony*, the epic Titanomachy, and no doubt elsewhere.[45] Use of it as a negative example of filial piety is made by the Furies in Aeschylus's *Eumenides* (640–66). Further, the immorality of the gods was already a matter of comment in the sixth century B.C.E., to judge from the fragments of Xenophanes. Indeed, the prominence of such implicit critiques in Euripides and in fourth-century works like Plato's *Euthyphro* suggests that the sort of argument that Wrong makes would have been well known to many in Aristophanes' audience (see also van Leeuwen 1898.147). Yet Right does not have a coherent response and, in effect, concedes the point in advance. His exclamation αἰβοῖ (906) and his call for a λεκάνη into which he can vomit (907) suggest immediate physical revulsion and familiarity with the matter at hand, but he can go no further in meeting Wrong's attack.[46] Thus this early skirmish already signals his inability to compete with Wrong on equal terms. This tactical defect is directly connected to his failure to question the coherence of the mythological tradition and to make of it the same sort of selective use that Wrong

does. His uncritical acceptance of the past makes it impossible for him to value one part of it over another. Thus he cannot go even as far as Pindar, who denies that the implications of the Pelops tradition (which he nevertheless reports) can be true (*Olympian* 1.52).

A similar inability to deal with the past with anything but blanket approval characterizes the discussion of warm baths that forms part of Right's case against contemporary life (837) and his exhortation to Pheidippides (991). The issue is taken up in the reply of Wrong (1044), who elicits from Right the opinion that warm baths make men cowardly (1046). It is at this point that the trap is ready to be sprung, as Wrong has already encountered his rival's inability to account for aspects of the mythological tradition that do not correspond to traditional ideas about morality. He cites the case of Heracles, whose bravery had been emphatically recognized at 1050 by Right. Wrong asks (1051): ποῦ ψυχρὰ δῆτα πώποτ' εἶδες Ἡράκλεια λουτρά, "Where did you ever see cold Heraclean springs?"[47] If hot springs are approved of by Heracles, and are essentially identical to hot baths, they must not make a man cowardly as Right had claimed. Right can offer no response to this rebuttal, neither to deny that Heraclean springs can properly be called "warm baths" nor to qualify his absolute valorization of the past. His only reply is that Wrong's logic is exactly what fills the agora with chattering youth and makes the schools empty (1052–54).[48] Wrong, meanwhile, has successfully appropriated Right's central claim by exposing his faulty understanding of the past and turned it into a liability for him.

Wrong further exacerbates the irritation felt by Right at the lack of respect accorded him by the youth by representing Right's advocacy of the old as itself a characteristic of the ancient and decrepit. By addressing Right as "Kronos," Wrong recalls both the epithet he used earlier (929) to describe his rival's age and attitudes, and also the succession myth to which he has already alluded (904–06). He also scornfully anticipates Right's exhortation to Pheidippides not to address his elders with names like "Iapetos" (998) and is able successfully to cast Right as the paleo-conservative par excellence, while styling himself, somewhat inconsistently, as a latter-day Zeus who will also overthrow *his* adversary.[49]

Wrong's attack on Right's outdatedness is incessant and varied. He refers to him as a "blind old man" (908) and "out of tune" (908). His words are "Dipoliodean" (984), referring to an apparently ancient festival of Zeus.[50] They are also "full of cicadas, Kekeides, and Bouphonia" (984–85), the first term referring to the old Athenian practice of fastening their hair with a cicada-shaped clip,[51] the second to an early

dithyrambic poet, and the third to another archaic festival.[52] Right's later citation of the fate of Peleus as an example of the good return bestowed by the gods on *sophrosyne*, "self-control," likewise earns him the epithet "Kronippos," a combination of "Kronos" and "horse" (1070).[53]

One effect of Wrong's constant name calling is to encourage Right to reply in kind. Yet Right's temper is ill-suited to such efforts, and his tendency to fall back on condemnations of contemporary life and individuals *tout court* leaves him open to Wrong's counterattack, while his inflexibility leaves him with little room to maneuver. Early in the agon, his attempt to use καταπύγων (literally "one who allows himself to be penetrated anally") as a term of abuse is nullified by Wrong's failure to take offense. His indiscriminate use of this and related terms also has disastrous consequences for his cause as a whole. Wrong again attacks Right's linkage of morality with traditional beliefs, this time invoking Zeus's frequent infidelities as an a fortiori justification of adultery (1077–82):

ἐμοὶ δ' ὁμιλῶν
χρῶ τῇ φύσει, σκίρτα, γέλα, νόμιζε μηδὲν αἰσχρόν.
μοιχὸς γὰρ ἢν τύχῃς ἁλούς, τάδ' ἀντερεῖς πρὸς αὐτόν,
ὡς οὐδὲν ἠδίκηκας· εἶτ' ἐς τὸν Δί' ἐπανενεγκεῖν,
κἀκεῖνος ὡς ἥττων ἔρωτός ἐστι καὶ γυναικῶν·
καίτοι σὺ θνητὸς ὢν θεοῦ πῶς μεῖζον ἂν δύναιο;

If you associate with me,
Indulge your nature, jump, laugh, consider nothing shameful.
For if you happen to get caught in adultery, you will reply to the husband
That you did nothing wrong. Then bring up how Zeus was bested by desire and women.
And could you, a mortal, be greater than a god?

Wrong's argument is essentially a continuation of his attack on the morality of the gods at 904b–06.[54] There it provoked the extreme disgust of Right, who called for a bowl into which he could vomit. Here Right is equally outraged (1083–84):

τί δ' ἢν ῥαφανιδωθῇ πιθόμενός σοι τέφρᾳ τε τιλθῇ,
ἕξει τινὰ γνώμην λέγειν τὸ μὴ εὐρύπρωκτος εἶναι;

And if by trusting in you he gets sodomized with a radish and singed with hot ash,
Will he have some motion to propose to keep him from being wide-assed?

Right's graphic prediction refers to the typical punishments adulterers could be subjected to at the hands of injured husbands, who, in theory at least, had the right to demand the death of the offender. Humiliating punishment, however, was also a possibility, including both *rhaphanidosis* (from ῥαφανίς, "radish") and depilation of the pubic hair by singeing. In a passage from Philonides (frag. 7 K.-A.), the oaths of adulterers are said to be written "in ashes." It seems unlikely to have been a particularly pleasant experience, and Right can confidently expect his evocation of the practice and its eventual result (τὸ . . . εὐρύπρωκτος εἶναι, 1084; literally "having an enlarged anus") to make an impact. He is therefore unprepared for the response of Wrong, who is undismayed at the prospect of Pheidippides becoming εὐρύπρωκτος in this or any other way.

We might attribute this attitude to Wrong's general shamelessness and indifference to the traditional norms of Athenian society, which no doubt account for his behavior in part. However, he is also alive to the rhetorical possibilities of Right's prediction, and now calls him to account for his previous characterizations of Athenian political and cultural life, of which, for Right, Wrong is the embodiment.[55]

Right had earlier attempted to insult Wrong as καταπύγων with indifferent results, then tried to sway Pheidippides from the practices of today's youth by encouraging him to avoid the καταπυγοσύνη of Antimachos (1022–23).[56] By employing καταπύγων and the abstract noun καταπυγοσύνη metaphorically to describe what he doesn't like (everything modern), Right makes it possible for Wrong to ignore completely the literal sense of the related word, εὐρύπρωκτος that Right expects to be the result of *rhaphanidosis*. Instead, taking Right at his word (909, 1022–23), Wrong treats the label εὐρύπρωκτος as nothing more than generic abuse. He appeals to Right's self-righteousness on this point and thus entices him to entrust the remainder of the debate to whether or not *euruproktia* is a bad thing. His strategy, however, is not to contest the inherent shamefulness of literal *rhaphanidosis* and *euruproktia* but to take advantage of Right's rhetorical intransigence, that is, his unwillingness to admit that his earlier charges of cultural indecency, represented metaphorically by καταπύγων and καταπυγοσύνη, do not have exact parallels on the level of sexual practice as well (1088–1102):

Ητ. φέρε δή μοι φράσον·
συνηγοροῦσιν ἐκ τινῶν;
Κρ. ἐξ εὐρυπρώκτων.
Ητ. πείθομαι.

τί δαί; τραγῳδοῦσ' ἐκ τίνων;
Κρ. ἐξ εὐρυπρώκτων.
Ητ. εὖ λέγεις.
δημηγοροῦσι δ' ἐκ τίνων;
Κρ. ἐξ εὐρυπρώκτων.
Ητ. ἆρα δῆτ'
ἔγνωκας ὡς οὐδὲν λέγεις;
καὶ τῶν θεατῶν ὁπότεροι πλείους σκόπει.
Κρ. καὶ δὴ σκοπῶ.
Ητ. τί δῆθ' ὁρᾷς;
Κρ. πολὺ πλείονας, νὴ τοὺς θεούς,
τοὺς εὐρυπρώκτους· τουτονὶ
γοῦν οἶδ' ἐγὼ κἀκεινονὶ
καὶ τὸν κομήτην τουτονί.
Ητ. τί δῆτ' ἐρεῖς;
Κρ. ἡττήμεθ'·

Wrong Come then, tell me, from where do the prosecutors come?
Right From the wide-assed.
Wrong I believe you. What then? Where do the tragedians come from?
Right From the wide-assed.
Wrong You're right. And the lawmakers?
Right From the wide-assed.
Wrong Do you see how wrong you are then? Now consider who are more numerous in the audience.
Right I'm doing just that.
Wrong So, what do you see?
Right By the gods, the wide-assed are much more numerous! I know that guy there is, anyway, and that one, and this one with the long hair.
Wrong What will you say then?
Right I'm beaten.

Audience abuse in Aristophanes is a common enough phenomenon. At *Wasps* 74–84, for example, the slaves pretend to hear responses from the audience that display their putative vices (excessive love of gambling, drink, sacrifices, hospitality). Similarly, the Clouds blame the Athenians for a variety of political and religious offenses (575–94, 606–26). These passages differ from the agon of *Clouds*, however, in that they remain on the level of direct or indirect invective and never require acceptance by the target of the abuse in order to be effective. Here, however, such acceptance is crucial if Wrong is to be victorious.

This problem is less difficult than might be imagined, however. Wrong achieves his purpose by exploiting the unwillingness of Right to separate the literal from the metaphorical. Right, in his obstinacy, believes his own rhetorical posturing. His inability to distinguish literal from metaphorical καταπυγοσύνη convinces him that everyone in the city has already taken the plunge for *euruproktia*, not that his original charges were imprecise and in need of serious qualification. With no longer any hope of a "silent majority" behind him, he erroneously concedes defeat and deserts to the enemy. Wrong is therefore able to exploit his own dialogic mobility in the contest to inflict upon Right a defeat that is devastating, if wholly spurious.

Despite his apparent victory in the agon, Wrong's supremacy within the play is not long sustained. His success is certainly qualified by the degree to which he is a creature associated with the laughable Socrates. The judgment passed on Socrates and his school at the end of the play is also a referendum on the activities of Wrong, as is the burning of the *phrontisterion*, with which his association appears particularly intimate.

Equally significant is his relationship with the treacherous Clouds, whose diction in the strophe (949–58) that opens the agon proper clearly indicates an attitude that will look indulgently upon Wrong's case. Their style in the ode is openly rhetorical and affected. The mannered wordplay of their opening: νῦν δείξετον τὼ πισύνω τοῖς περιδεξίοισι λόγουσι, "Now *show*, you who trust in *clever* speeches," is sandwiched around the tragic word πίσυνος, "trusting," producing a highly literate blend of verbal dexterity and tragically inflected speech very much in keeping with Wrong's own practice (Starkie 1911.211 and Richards 1909.157). The phrase γνωμοτύποις μερίμναις, "strikingly formed cares" (952), employs a poetic word, μέριμνα, "care," in a compound adjective that fuses Wrong's ῥηματίοισιν καινοῖς, "new little sayings," suggesting stylistic preciousness, and his concluding prediction that Right will be destroyed ὑπὸ τῶν γνωμῶν, "by my maxims" (943, 948).[57] Thus on the level of diction, the Clouds' call to the *logoi* seems particularly directed to Wrong, who shares with them numerous attributes.[58]

The link between the rhetoric of the Clouds and the character of Wrong continues to be developed in the course of the agon at the expense of Right. After the conclusion of Right's speech, the chorus responds to his performance and invites Wrong to begin (1024–31):

ὦ καλλίπυργον σοφίαν
κλεινοτάτην ἐπασκῶν,

ὡς ἡδύ σου τοῖσι λόγοις
σῶφρον ἔπεστιν ἄνθος.
εὐδαίμονες ἄρ' ἦσαν οἱ ζῶντες τότε.
πρὸς τάδε σ', ὦ κομψοπρεπῆ μοῦσαν ἔχων,
δεῖ σε λέγειν τι καινόν, ὡς
ηὐδοκίμηκεν ἀνήρ.[59]

Oh you who seek out the fine-towered, most famous wisdom,
How sweet the bloom of moderation upon your words!
Evidently, the men of that age were blessed!
Against these things, oh you of the sophisticated Muse,
You must say something new,
Since the man has distinguished himself.

The diction of the Clouds clearly indicates their differing dispositions toward Right and Wrong. They first address Right. Their diction is elevated by ἄνθος and κλεινοτάτην, both common in poetry, and καλλίπυργον, which appears in Euripides (*Supplices* 618, *Bacchae* 19, 1202). Consistent with their own affinity for rhetoric, the Clouds' characterization of Right's anti-rhetorical leanings is condescending. They refer to him as σοφίαν . . . ἐπασκῶν, "seeking out wisdom." The choice of words here is strikingly similar to their description of Strepsiades earlier in the play (512–17):

εὐτυχία γένοιτο τἀν-
θρώπῳ, ὅτι προήκων
ἐς βαθὺ τῆς ἡλικίας
νεωτέροις τὴν φύσιν αὐ-
τοῦ πράγμασιν χρωτίζεται
καὶ *σοφίαν ἐπασκεῖ*

May he have good fortune,
Since having arrived at the depths of age,
He employs his nature
On newer matters
And *seeks out wisdom*.

Here Strepsiades' interest in "newer matters" is treated with mock seriousness by the Clouds, who emphasize the difficulty of the task for someone like Strepsiades by their reference to his age. In their words of approval to Right, they exhibit the same sense of superiority (one they do not employ in their address to Wrong) by repeating σοφίαν . . .

ἐπασκεῖν (512–13) and concluding ironically (cf. ἄρα, here "evidently") with a remark about the blessedness of previous generations.

When the Clouds turn to Wrong, their approach is altogether different. They refer to his Muse as κομψοπρεπής, "fittingly accomplished." κομψός is associated with fluent speech by Socrates in his attempt to instruct Strepsiades (649) and also in Plato (*Lysis* 216a); it therefore has a particular appropriateness to the character of Wrong.[60] Robert Neil notes (1901.9) that the word itself is first used by Euripides in serious poetry. Further, in *Knights*, Aristophanes had already used the brilliant neologism κομψευριπικῶς, "in an accomplished Euripidean manner" (18), associating Euripides, oratorical fluency, and the contemporary vogue for coining new adjectives (and presumably adverbs) using the suffix -κός (-κῶς).[61] Thus in styling Wrong's Muse κομψοπρεπής, the Clouds distinguish him from the old-fashioned milieu of Right (cf. 959) and associate him with the rhetorical tradition (including Euripides and the Sophists) of which they are patron deities. Likewise, they encourage Wrong to produce τι καινόν (1032), recalling his earlier claims to novelty discussed above, as well as their own permutations (38–55).

These correspondences between the words of the chorus and the concerns and actual diction of Wrong suggest the lengths to which the chorus is willing to go to assimilate themselves to him for the time being. Although they implicitly reject him later, they are clearly his allies in the agon, and despite his pretensions to antinomian freedom, he is little more than their factotum. In this way, despite the fact that Wrong enjoys total victory over his adversary in the agon, his success is also relativized by his subordination to the Clouds and by the condescension they employ in pandering to his interests and affectations while concealing their own.

Wrong is certainly the bearer of great rhetorical power in *Clouds* and is allowed to make *muttotos*, "mincemeat," not out of Cleon (cf. *Wasps* 62–63), but out of Right's single-voiced discourse. Nevertheless, his victory is qualified by his relationships with Socrates and with the Clouds, just as the final triumph of the Clouds is diminished by their willing association with Socrates, Strepsiades, and Wrong himself. The quality of these interactions, characterized by the presence of intertextual links to various sources, illustrates the degree to which the novelistic qualities of Aristophanic comedy work to produce relationships, visible in different degrees to the various audience constituencies, that are fundamentally ambivalent and mutually destabilizing.

3 *Clouds* on *Clouds* and the Aspirations of *Wasps*

> The novelist . . . may depict moments in his own life, or make allusion to them, he may openly polemicize with his literary enemies, and so forth . . . important here is the fact that the underlying, original formal author (the author of the authorial image) appears in a new relationship with the represented world. Both now find themselves subject to the same temporally valorized measurements, for the "depicting" authorial language now lies on the same plane as the "depicted" language of the hero, and may enter into dialogic relations and hybrid combinations with it (indeed, it cannot help but enter into such relations).—Mikhail Bakhtin

> It is just as impossible to forge an identity between myself, my own "I" and that "I" that is the subject of my stories, as it is to lift myself up by my own hair.—Mikhail Bakhtin

Perhaps more than any other Aristophanic work, *Wasps* is organized by a series of oppositions.[1] Yet for all the play's attempts to situate itself among Aristophanes' other plays (and Old Comedy in general) and to illuminate the character of Philocleon, his allies, and antagonists, nothing like a coherent picture emerges. The primary registers of meaning in the play: moderate comedy versus the extremes of high and low, father versus son, potent versus impotent, and condemnation versus acquittal—all turn out to be unstable oppositions that ultimately undermine the very categories of experience they seek to inscribe.

The results of these interactions are seen in the carnivalesque finale when several of the play's thematic indices are reprised in a new form.[2] Philocleon, who has already assumed several animal disguises in order to escape from his confinement (in addition to his intimate connection with the sphekomorphic chorus), returns to the stage, abducted flute-girl in tow, as something like the spirit of Phrynichean tragedy (1490, 1523; see MacDowell 1971.324–25). In this mode, he is fully human as he dances in the competition that comprises the *exodos*. It is Philocleon's rivals who are now beasts, the "sons of Carcinus" (1501), whose crab-like movements are ridiculed.[3] Moreover, despite his advanced age, Philocleon returns rejuvenated and full of sexual desire, in contrast to the other dancers, whom the old man paradoxically declares to be hopelessly outdated "Kronoses" (1480–81).[4]

Yet it is not only on the level of plot that *Wasps* seeks to subvert the very oppositions it explicitly invokes. *Wasps* also represents the climax of a series of plays that self-consciously reflect on and justify the essential features of Aristophanic comedy[5] —reflections that particularly emphasize the reception of the previous year's (423) *Clouds*, which finished dead last.

This fact requires some comment. The relative rankings of plays does not much figure in discussions of comedy and tragedy, mostly because accurate records do not appear to have been kept—indeed, no attempt seems to have been made to establish a chronology until Aristotle in the fourth century. That we are so unusually well informed about the fate of *Clouds* is due, paradoxically, to *Clouds* itself—or rather to the second version of the play that has displaced the original in the Aristophanic corpus.[6] In this *Clouds*, the chorus addresses directly the failure of the original, asserting that it was Aristophanes' "wisest comedy" (522) and one that cost him much labor (524). They complain that he was unworthily defeated by "vulgar rivals" (524), before they recall those past successes made possible by the appreciation of wise and clever spectators (σοφοῖς, 526; δεξιούς, 527) capable of appreciating the novel conceits of the poet (547).

The self-assessment of the revised *Clouds* thus clearly identifies the original as a play with high aspirations and so a fitting successor to *Acharnians* and *Knights*, both of which polemically assert the quality of Aristophanes' work vis-à-vis that of his rivals. Within this sequence, *Wasps* may look to be an anomaly with its pointed characterization of itself as offering nothing "too grand" (56). This modesty appears to set it espe-

cially at odds with *Clouds*, whose rewritten *parabasis*, as we have seen, refers to the original as Aristophanes' "wisest" play.

The anti-*Clouds* revisionism of *Wasps* should not be taken at face value, however, and I will argue that despite its self-deprecation, *Wasps* actively reaffirms the aesthetic and intellectual allegiances of *Clouds* with which it has an active dialogical relationship in its engagement with both the original play and its rewritten *parabasis*.

To make this argument, I shall focus on the claims *Wasps* makes for itself in the prologue, specifically in lines 54–66, to show how the program elaborated by the slave Xanthias—based on the putative moderation of the play—is undermined even as it is delivered, then completely overturned in the *parabasis*. The emphasis on moderation, which is the centerpiece of Xanthias's description, at first seems intended to separate *Wasps* from the first *Clouds* (produced the previous year). However, the attempt to distance *Wasps* from *Clouds* is better understood as a rhetorical strategy than as a change of aesthetic orientation.

I continue with an examination of *Wasps*' *parabasis* to show how its concerns and diction suggest not a departure from Aristophanes' previous practice but, instead, an explicit evocation of the spirit of *Clouds*. I also consider how certain specific and general characteristics of the *parabasis* undermine the thematic indices of the play, even as it develops them. Thus by the end of the play, *Wasps*' claims to moderation evaporate completely, revealing that its aspirations are fully in accord with those of the play it affects to reject. The relationship between these claims about nebulous ambition and waspish restraint remain in dialogical tension, however, and are no more resolvable at the dramatic level than are the relationships between the two plays themselves—or even those between the two versions of *Clouds*.[7]

In the early extant plays (through *Birds*), Aristophanes begins either with a monologue that renders unnecessary any explicit discussion of the plot[8] or with a dialogue whose obscurity is eventually cleared up by an explanatory speech addressed directly to the audience.[9] *Wasps*, however, goes further in seeking not only to clarify the action to follow but to situate the play appropriately in relation both to comedy in general and, specifically, to *Clouds*. It opens with a pair of slaves, Xanthias and Sosias, guarding their master's father, whom they regard as a "monster" (κνώδαλον, 4).[10] Their vigilance is not complete, however, as they succumb to sleep. Upon awakening, they discuss their respective dreams, whereupon Xanthias turns and addresses the audience metatheatrically regarding the contents of the play in which he is a character (54–66):

φέρε νυν κατείπω τοῖς θεαταῖς τὸν λόγον,
ὀλίγ' ἄτθ' ὑπειπὼν πρῶτον αὐτοῖσιν ταδί,
μηδὲν παρ' ἡμῶν προσδοκᾶν λίαν μέγα,
μηδ' αὖ γέλωτα Μεγαρόθεν κεκλεμμένον.
ἡμῖν γὰρ οὐκ ἔστ' οὔτε κάρυ' ἐκ φορμίδος
δούλω διαρριπτοῦντε τοῖς θεωμένοις,
οὔθ' Ἡρακλῆς τὸ δεῖπνον ἐξαπατώμενος,
οὐδ' αὖθις ἀνασελγαινόμενος Εὐριπίδης·
οὐδ' εἰ Κλέων γ' ἔλαμψε τῆς τύχης χάριν,
αὖθις τὸν αὐτὸν ἄνδρα μυττωτεύσομεν.
ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἡμῖν λογίδιον γνώμην ἔχον,
ὑμῶν μὲν αὐτῶν οὐχὶ δεξιώτερον,
κωμῳδίας δὲ φορτικῆς σοφώτερον.

Come now, let me tell the audience the plot,
Adding this bit of advice first,
Not to expect from us anything too grand,
Nor, in turn, laughter stolen from Megara.
You won't see a pair of slaves
Scattering nuts from a basket for the spectators,
Nor Heracles cheated out of dinner,
Nor Euripides being abused again.
Nor even if Cleon shines (thanks to his good luck)
Will we cut the man into mincemeat again.
But we have a sensible little story,
No more clever than you yourselves,
But wiser than vulgar comedy.

Xanthias's speech sets out two possible comic models, vulgar "Megarian" and "grand," both extremes, he implies, that *Wasps* will avoid. An examination of this system of classification, however, shows the schema to be flawed from early on, allowing Aristophanes to assert the play's moderation while aspiring at the same time to "greater" things.

To begin with, the rejection of vulgar Megarian comedy affects to be an expression of the modesty and limited aspirations of *Wasps*—if it has no aspirations to be "too grand," at least it will not be too vulgar.[11] Yet as it turns out, the rejection of Megarian comedy has little to do with what a comedy does or does not contain, it is, instead, a convenient formula with which Aristophanes and others assert their superiority over their rivals.

Xanthias's claims about *Wasps*' avoidance of vulgar humor attribute

to the play a characteristic that would set it apart from Aristophanes' practice elsewhere.[12] Aristophanes himself stages Megarian comedy in *Acharnians* (729–817) when he brings on stage the Megarian trader who has disguised his daughters, and who lamely persuades Dikaiopolis to buy them as χοῖροι, "pigs," thereby taking literally the obscene synecdoche whereby the singular χοῖρος is slang for the female genitalia.[13] In fact, the trader explicitly refers to his deception in dialect as Μεγαρικά τις μαχανά, "a Megarian device" (738).[14] Likewise, although "Herakles cheated of dinner" does not specifically occur in Aristophanes (not counting *Birds* 1692, where deceit is not really the issue), the comic Herakles is nevertheless well represented in *Peace*, *Birds*, and *Frogs*, all of which take advantage of the hero's healthy appetite.[15]

Yet the importance of Megarian comedy lies less in its relationship to historical literary phenomena than in its use as a convenient tool either to excuse (while drawing attention to) one's own vulgarity or to denigrate the work of other, less self-aware rivals.

Nor is the symbolic value of Megarian humor the sole property of Aristophanes. His rivals, too, both evoke and repudiate it at the same time. For example, a character in Eupolis' *Prospaltians* says: Ἡράκλης, τοῦτ' ἔστι σοι σκῶμμ' ἀσελγὲς καὶ Μεγαρικὸν καὶ σφόδρα ψυχρόν, "O Herakles, there is a joke that is tasteless, Megarian, and extremely frigid" (frag. 261 K.-A.). "Megarian" is here used in a manner that emphasizes lack of quality over geographical provenance. Without delving too deeply into the obscure prehistory of comedy, what seems to emerge is the established use of Megarian primarily as a rhetorical term that refers to vulgar comic situations of which the writer either approves or disapproves.[16]

Both literal and metaphorical senses of the term appear in an interesting form in a quotation from Aristophanes' predecessor Ecphantides, whose words suggest that the geographical associations of Megarian comedy had not yet been completely lost but that the sense of "vulgar" (in comparison to Attic comedy?) was beginning to be more strongly felt, and that the word could be perceived as double-voiced (frag. 3 K.-A.):

> Μεγαρικῆς κωμῳδίας †ᾆσμα δίειμαι†·
> αἰσχυνόμενος τὸ δρᾶμα Μεκαρικὸν ποιεῖν
>
> I sing a song of Megarian comedy,
> But I'm ashamed to make my work "Megarian."[17]

The quotation points to an historical separation beginning to take place between the two senses of "Megarian." The first line clearly refers to explicit borrowing from Megarian comedy, whether a specific work or a recognized type of song. Moreover, no intrinsic negative association is attached to such borrowing. Were it not for the considerations adduced in the second line, there is no reason to think that Ecphantides would have any qualms about doing so. As the second line makes clear, however, one cannot any longer sing a Megarian song in Athens without liability. Megarian in this sense is similar to the σκῶμμ' . . . Μεγαρικόν of Eupolis, cited above, which functions as an object of real, or feigned, reproach.

This use of Megarian as a term of reproach has specific consequences for Ecphantides as he represents himself in the fragment, for he cannot confidently avail himself of whatever legitimate advantages might be gained from singing a Μεγαρικῆς κωμῳδίας ᾆσμα because of the negative associations already in place. By "Megarizing" in one way, his critics would allege, he was "Megarizing" in the other as well (τὸ δρᾶμα Μεκαρικὸν ποιεῖν).[18] Thus we see that, by the time of Aristophanes, the term Megarian as applied to comedy had become highly ambivalent, perhaps still capable of referring primarily to a geographical location, but susceptible to being appropriated as an expression connoting vulgar physical humor.

A parallel case from the same passage of *Wasps* can perhaps help to illustrate the point that charges made by Aristophanes regarding his plays may have as their primary focus the simple assertion of comic superiority—as opposed to the intention of providing an accurate description of his own comedy. To illustrate his departure from the practice of inferior writers who recycle the same tactics again and again (cf. *Clouds* 549–59), Xanthias cites Cleon and promises that they will not "make mincemeat" (μυττωτεύσομεν) out of him *again*, even if he does shine (62–63).[19] The reference is to the portrayal of Cleon in *Knights* in which the Sausage-Seller, whose claim to rival Paphlagon-Cleon is based on his even greater vulgarity, colorfully offers to be ground into μυττωτόν (a mixture of cheese, garlic, oil, and various other ingredients).[20] Aristophanes' boast, therefore, is a subtle *praeteritio* that takes a swipe at Cleon by recalling the earlier inflammatory portrayal, even as it affects to do the opposite. Despite Xanthias's statement to the contrary, *Wasps* "dices" Cleon once again.

Moreover, by making hash of Cleon in alluding to the successful performance of *Knights*—and perhaps to a particularly admired con-

ceit—Aristophanes recycles old material in much the same way as the rivals whose practices he criticizes. This observation that Aristophanes is a practitioner of the low tactics for which he mocks his rivals is a familiar one, but its familiarity should not obscure the fact that such assertions are significant primarily as rhetorical attempts to persuade the audience to perceive differences between Aristophanes and his rivals, and to react accordingly. The primary evidence for this assertion that Aristophanes is better because he is more original and less vulgar than the others is, of course, the assertion itself, and even in the end, the differences between Aristophanes and his rivals are easier to posit than to document.[21]

What emerges from this examination of Xanthias's discussion of vulgar comedy is that Aristophanes mentions κωμῳδία φορτική to suggest that he aspires to comedy that achieves not only the minimum standard of acceptability, with competitors both higher and lower, but that his avoidance of typical comic clichés allows him to run at the head of the pack. Thus the modesty with which Xanthias introduces the play is part of an elaborate putdown that elevates Aristophanes at the expense of his rivals.[22]

One end of the spectrum of comic possibilities is occupied by vulgar comedy, the other extreme is characterized by Xanthias as λίαν μέγα (56), "too grand," a term that appears to evoke the failure of *Clouds*, produced the previous year. On the basis of this, and the fact that the reception of *Clouds* is specifically referred to in the *parabasis* of *Wasps*, it is reasonable to believe that λίαν μέγα is a condescending reference to the audience's failure to appreciate *Clouds*.[23] If this likely identification is correct, *Wasps* begins with a clear, if insincere, rejection of Aristophanes' "wisest" play (*Clouds* 522, *Wasps* 1047).[24]

The rejection is developed at length in the lines that follow. Having disparaged comedy that is λίαν μέγα, Xanthias reuses μεγ- in a variety of uncomplimentary contexts and adapts his language to underscore *Wasps*' putative moderation. He characterizes vulgar comedy as "laughter from Megara," ludicrously punning on Μεγαρόθεν (57). Further, within the same lines, the stiffly comical Bdelycleon is referred to as ὁ μέγας (68). In both cases, μεγ- diminishes the status of the elements with which it is associated. Finally, the multiple repetitions of the lexeme reduce further the significance of its first use and contribute to the negative connotations Xanthias attributes to comedy in the "grand" style.

Xanthias also corrects his language to emphasize his characterization of *Wasps* as without pretension and possessing moderate wit. He downplays his earlier reference to the play, replacing λόγον ("plot," 54)

with its diminutive λογιδίον ("plotlet," 64). Nevertheless, Xanthias concedes, the play has judgment (γνώμη, 64). This characteristic, too, is presented as an aspect of moderation in that it allows the play to be somewhat wise (66) without being (or at least seeming) too clever for the audience (65).[25] Thus the rhetoric of Xanthias situates *Wasps* as a decidedly middlebrow comedy, neither high nor low, in fact precisely calibrated to correspond to the acumen of the audience; in other words, according to the slave, it is primed for success.[26]

Yet there is more to *Wasps*' unassuming appearance than Xanthias is eager to let on.[27] As will emerge clearly, his repudiation of *Clouds* is problematic. In fact, throughout the play, *Wasps* shows itself to be intensely involved with *Clouds*, both as a commentator on the original play's reception and as a doublet of the rewritten *Clouds parabasis*, which also condemns the failure of the original *Clouds*. Indeed, despite the emphatic statements of Xanthias to the contrary, the aspirations of *Wasps* are quite high. Like Euripides' Telephus, it employs artifice to "seem a beggar," but retains its identity without appearing to do so (frag. 698 N^2). Far from being a critic of *Clouds*-style grand comedy, *Wasps* pitches its aspirations to coincide specifically with those of *Clouds*. We shall continue by exploring the parallels between the two plays.

The most obvious point of contact between *Wasps* and *Clouds* is the *parabasis* of *Wasps*, which discusses Aristophanes' evaluation of the reception of *Clouds* the previous year. It will be useful to quote the relevant passage in full (*Wasps* 1015–50):

νῦν αὖτε λεῲ προσέχετε τὸν νοῦν, εἴπερ καθαρόν τι φιλεῖτε. 1015
μέμψασθαι γὰρ τοῖσι θεαταῖς ὁ ποιητὴς νῦν ἐπιθυμεῖ.
ἀδικεῖσθαι γάρ φησιν πρότερος πόλλ' αὐτοὺς εὖ πεποιηκώς,
τὰ μὲν οὐ φανερῶς ἀλλ' ἐπικουρῶν κρύβδην ἑτέροισι ποιηταῖς,
μιμησάμενος τὴν Εὐρυκλέους μαντείαν καὶ διάνοιαν,
εἰς ἀλλοτρίας γαστέρας ἐνδὺς κωμῳδικὰ πολλὰ χέασθαι· 1020
μετὰ τοῦτο δὲ καὶ φανερῶς ἤδη κινδυνεύων καθ' ἑαυτόν,
οὐκ ἀλλοτρίων ἀλλ' οἰκείων Μουσῶν στόμαθ' ἡνιοχήσας.
ἀρθεὶς δὲ μέγας καὶ τιμηθεὶς ὡς οὐδεὶς πώποτ' ἐν ὑμῖν,
οὐκ†ἐκτελέσαι† φησὶν ἐπαρθεὶς οὐδ' ὀγκῶσαι τὸ φρόνημα,
οὐδὲ παλαίστρας περικωμάζειν πειρῶν· οὐδ' εἴ τις ἐραστὴς 1025
κωμῳδεῖσθαι παιδίχ' ἑαυτοῦ μισῶν ἔσπευσε πρὸς αὐτόν,
οὐδενὶ πώποτέ φησι πιθέσθαι, γνώμην τιν' ἔχων ἐπιεικῆ,
ἵνα τὰς Μούσας αἷσιν χρῆται μὴ προαγωγοὺς ἀποφήνῃ.
οὐδ' ὅτε πρῶτόν γ' ἦρξε διδάσκειν, ἀνθρώποις φήσ' ἐπιθέσθαι,

ἀλλ' Ἡρακλέους ὀργήν τιν' ἔχων τοῖσι μεγίστοις ἐπιχειρεῖν,
θρασέως ξυστὰς εὐθὺς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτῷ τῷ καρχαρόδοντι,
οὗ δεινόταται μὲν ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν Κύννης ἀκτῖνες ἔλαμπον,
ἑκατὸν δὲ κύκλῳ κεφαλαὶ κολάκων οἰμωξομένων ἐλιχμῶντο
περὶ τὴν κεφαλήν, φωνὴν δ' εἶχεν χαράδρας ὄλεθρον τετοκυίας,
φώκης δ' ὀσμήν, Λαμίας ὄρχεις ἁπλύτους, πρωκτὸν δὲ καμήλου.
τοιοῦτον ἰδὼν τέρας οὔ φησιν δείσας καταδωροδοκῆσαι,
ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἔτι καὶ νυνὶ πολεμεῖ· φησίν τε μετ' αὐτὸν
τοῖς ἠπιάλοις ἐπιχειρῆσαι πέρυσιν καὶ τοῖς πυρετοῖσιν,
οἳ τοὺς πατέρας τ' ἦγχον νύκτωρ καὶ τοὺς πάππους ἀπέπνιγον,
κατακλινόμενοί τ' ἐπὶ ταῖς κοίταις ἐπὶ τοῖσιν ἀπράγμοσιν ὑμῶν
ἀντωμοσίας καὶ προσκλήσεις καὶ μαρτυρίας συνεκόλλων,
ὥστ' ἀναπηδᾶν δειμαίνοντας πολλοὺς ὡς τὸν πολέμαρχον.
τοιόνδ' εὑρόντες ἀλεξίκακον τῆς χώρας τῆσδε καθαρτήν,
πέρυσιν καταπροὔδοτε καινοτάταις σπείραντ' αὐτὸν διανοίαις,
ἃς ὑπὸ τοῦ μὴ γνῶναι καθαρῶς ὑμεῖς ἐποιήσατ' ἀναλδεῖς·
καίτοι σπένδων πόλλ' ἐπὶ πολλοῖς ὕμνυσιν τὸν Διόνυσον
μὴ πώποτ' ἀμείνον' ἔπη τούτων κωμῳδικὰ μηδέν' ἀκοῦσαι.
τοῦτο μὲν οὖν ἔσθ' ὑμῖν αἰσχρὸν τοῖς μὴ γνοῦσιν παραχρῆμα,
ὁ δὲ ποιητὴς οὐδὲν χείρων παρὰ τοῖσι σοφοῖς νενόμισται,
εἰ παρελαύνων τοὺς ἀντιπάλους τὴν ἐπίνοιαν ξυνέτριψεν.

Now, in turn, pay attention if you love anything pure,
For the poet wants to blame the audience.
For he says they wronged him, although he benefited them often in the past,
Giving aid to other poets not openly at times,
Imitating the oracle and thought of Eurykles,
He poured forth much comedy entering into the bellies of others.
But after this, now openly running the risk himself,
He took the reins of his domestic Muses, not someone else's.
And having been raised up great as no one ever among you,
He says that he didn't become arrogant and his head didn't swell,
Nor did he start to frequent the wrestling schools. Nor even if some lover
Angry at his darling urged him to ridicule the boy,
He says that he never was persuaded, keeping a certain seemly good judgment
Lest he be convicted of prostituting his Muses.
And when he first began to produce, he says that he did not attack ordinary men,

But, with the temper of Heracles, he tried the greatest ones,
Bravely assailing from the start the sharp-toothed one himself,
From whose eyes the most dreadful rays of Cynna shone,
And one hundred heads of wretched flatterers licked in a circle
Around his head. And he had the terrible voice of a torrent brought forth,
The smell of a seal, the unwashable balls of Lamias, and a camel's asshole.
He denies that after he saw this monstrosity, he took a bribe out of fear,
But, on your behalf, even still he wages war. And he says that after him,
Last year he assaulted the chills and fevers
That strangled your fathers at night and choked your grandfathers,
And reclining on the beds of you who avoided public business,
Glued together indictments, summonses, and affidavits
So that many of you jumped up and madly ran to the Polemarch.
Having discovered such an "averter of evil" and a "purifier" of the land,
Last year you betrayed the same man as he sowed his newest thoughts,
Which you caused to be infertile because you did not understand
them fully.
And yet with libation upon libation, he swears by Dionysus
That no one ever heard better comic verses than these.
And this is truly shameful for you who don't understand immediately,
But among those who are wise, the poet is considered no worse,
If in passing his competitors, he crashed the idea.

The *parabasis* of *Wasps* is expressly concerned with the failure of *Clouds* in 423. Aristophanes claims to have been wronged by the audience whom he had previously benefited (1017). Although this statement seems designed to refer to all of his plays prior to *Wasps*—indeed, at 1030–35 it is the portrayal of Cleon in *Knights* that is the primary reference—*Clouds* is of crucial importance. Reference to it is explicitly marked by πέρυσιν ("last year," 1038) and made emphatic by the chiastic alternation of vowels (πέ͟ρυ͟σιν vs. πυ͟ρε͟τοῖσιν) in the lines that follow (1038–42). Aristophanes' actions are characterized as those of a Herakles (1030).[28] Like him, Aristophanes is an ἀλεξίκακος, "averter of evil," and καθαρτής, "purifier" (1043).[29] But he was "betrayed" last year, on the occasion of *Clouds*' performance, in the process of sowing "the newest thoughts" (1044). These verses he declares to have been the best comic verses anyone has ever heard (1047–48). The interest of *Wasps* in the fate of *Clouds* is emphatic, unambiguous, and sustained throughout the *parabasis*.

The degree of direct reference to *Clouds* in the *Wasps parabasis* is

substantial. The connections between the two plays run even deeper, however. The *Wasps parabasis* resounds significantly not only with the failed original but also with the revised *Clouds*, which, like *Wasps*, is concerned with setting the record straight about the failure of the original play. Indeed, the fact that *Wasps* probably antedates the *Clouds* revision suggests that Aristophanes wrote the new version of the *Clouds parabasis* to correspond closely to the *parabasis* of *Wasps*. In this sense, in addition to offering an important interpretation of the fate of *Clouds*, the revised *parabasis* can be read as a virtual commentary on the *parabasis* of *Wasps* as well.[30] In any case, the similarities between the two passages testify strongly against an attempt to take Xanthias's self-deprecating description of *Wasps* as nothing too grand as anything but rhetorical: an attempt to position *Wasps* as built to succeed where *Clouds* had failed. Seen in this way, the aspirations of *Wasps* are not at all moderate. Not until the *parabasis*, however, are these aesthetic preferences, thematic concerns, and characteristic modes of expression displayed openly.

Before going too far, however, in making the *parabasis* a source of irrefutable evidence about the attitudes of Aristophanes, it is necessary to say something about that most seductive form of Aristophanic comedy, the *parabasis*. There is probably no single aspect of Aristophanic comedy that has caused so much sustained debate as to its history and function.[31] It is not my intention here to take a position in the argument concerning its provenance and development. Rather, I would like to consider a crucial interpretative problem the *parabasis* presents, one that has important implications for my position. I argue that the *parabasis*, by the very nature of its formal structure, introduces an irreducible ambivalence into the "message" of the author, as the epigraphs to this chapter suggest, and that the authorial voice, like parodic speech, must be understood in quotation marks that signal the distance caused by the intermediary position of the chorus between author and audience. This aspect of the *parabasis* has two immediate consequences for my argument, one reaffirming its general thesis, the other qualifying the degree to which the *parabasis* can serve as decisive evidence to link the concerns of *Clouds* and *Wasps*.

The *parabasis* has a unique function in Aristophanic comedy that, as we have seen, appears elsewhere to frustrate clear-cut resolution in favor of a lingering ambivalence. The orientation of the *parabasis* is quite different. After all, by claiming to represent the words of Aristophanes as author, it appears to offer some certainty regarding his opinions. Yet the *parabasis* is a radically double-voiced discourse that only seems to report the straightforward speech of the author, while its promised revelation

turns out to be as elusive as the free meals offered at the end of *Lysistrata* and *Ecclesiazusae*.[32]

Although the choruses of Aristophanic comedy, when speaking for Aristophanes as they typically do in part of the *parabasis*, say nothing to suggest that there is any divergence between their perspective and that of the poet, choruses are not known for their veracity or good judgment.[33] But even disregarding any opinions we might have concerning the reliability of the chorus (indeed, their limitations might well be ignored by an audience habituated to the form of the *parabasis*), the interposition of *any* obstacle between the author and his audience necessarily dialogizes (and therefore qualifies) the authorial voice, whether this fact is acknowledged by the speaker(s) or not.[34]

In Aristophanes, this means that the status of the *parabasis* as a vehicle for authorial intent is relativized and the statements of the "author" become those of just another comic character. Consequently, the pronouncements of the "author" in the *parabasis* create a fascinating ambivalence. On the one hand, their status as "authorial" suggests a kind of built-in superiority to statements that come without the label. On the other hand, as *comic* statements of "fact," they have no more claim on our trust than the slave prologue's indirect castigation of Aristophanes' rivals or Dikaiopolis' complaints about Cleon. In each case, what appears on the surface to be an unambiguous statement of historical fact turns out to be filtered through the lens of a character. It is, therefore, of a different order than the words of an historical *chorodidaskalos*, who did not take the stage *as himself* and therefore made no appearance in the play, despite implications to the contrary by his comic minions.

Let us pause here briefly to consider the relevant case of Plato's work, though the dialogues are structured differently than *Wasps* with regard to the position of the author.[35] In Plato, the author is almost completely effaced by his subject, the justification of Socrates and the Socratic way of life.[36] On the other hand, meaning emerges from a dialogue, as from a drama, through the interaction of characters, of whom the protagonist is usually Socrates. Yet Socrates is not always the primary interlocutor. In *Parmenides*, *Laws*, *Sophist*, and *Statesman*, the chief speaker is someone other than Socrates.[37]

This combination of varied interlocutors and the dialogue format produces great interpretive difficulties. It seems clear that Socrates is the spokesman for Plato, but this perception is easier to affirm than to justify, at least if we limit our appeal to non-arbitrary features of the dialogues. Why, for instance, if Socrates is Plato's spokesman, does he

not appear in all the dialogues—or at least in all of the later dialogues, those written after Plato had discovered this particularly effective way of expressing his "voice"?[38] Moreover, if Socrates is any kind of spokesman in the conventional sense, why did Plato feel it useful to write dialogues at all? What is added to the philosophical presentation that would not be equally well conveyed by a lecture in the persona of Socrates? Finally, what does it mean to be a spokesman, anyway? What advantage—philosophical, rhetorical, or other—is gained by writing dialogues, or even monologues, whose "hero" is Socrates over those whose "hero" is Plato?

These questions, and many others that occur to careful readers, are, of course, speculative. My point in bringing up the subject here is to draw attention to the fact that understanding Socrates as a simple stand-in for Plato produces as many interpretative difficulties as it solves. Further, in the dialogues where Socrates is either absent altogether (*Laws*) or takes a secondary role (e.g., *Parmenides*, *Timaeus*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*), the reader's primary impulse to see Socrates simply as the spokesman for Plato is untenable. Moreover, such an understanding, even if methodologically justified, would have to account for the dialogue format generally and explain why the "spokesman" spends his time reacting to the interests and abilities of other characters (who, after all, are literary fictions who could have been written out of the script) rather than delivering Plato's message in a more direct form.[39] Finally, even if all of these questions were answered sufficiently, the problem of the "spokesman" would remain. The point is, of course, that the dramatic form produced by the creation of an intermediary spokesman necessarily obscures the figure of the author who created him. Plato does not completely disappear, but neither is the relationship between himself and his characters transparent.

The debate about the relationship of author to spokesman in the Platonic dialogues has not resonated in the scholarship of Aristophanic comedy as strongly as it might. There are important similarities, however. Although *parabaseis* appear in most of the plays, and twice in several, they do not appear in all of then. Where is the voice of the author in these plays, if his presence is a core element of Old Comedy?[40] Similarly, even in the plays with a complete *parabasis*, if the author is only in the *parabasis*, what is the function of the rest of the play, that is, the parts that do not, on this hypothesis, contain the author? Even the form of these questions seems unsatisfactory, but this aporia is the byproduct of attempting to give the *parabasis* a privileged status, and it is circular to

argue that the *parabasis* is more important in the plays where it is important, and less so where it is not present.

Moreover, to return again to the final question I asked about the Platonic dialogue, what does it mean to be a spokesman? Indeed, the term suggests a kind of transparency that effaces the distance between invisible author and his audience, but the fact that there is an intermediary position *at all* points to the possibility that a character in that position may misconstrue, distort, or lack precision. What remains of the authorial voice then? Clearly it does not disappear, at least on the generalized level of the play as a whole or as a rhetorical conceit, but neither is it isolatable to the more or less accurate summaries of the *parabaseis*. Instead, the author's voice remains qualified: the chorus' words hold out the promise of authorial presence, while the quotation marks around them testify to the formal separation that makes such presence an impossibility.

This sense of ambivalent qualification in the *parabasis* can perhaps be most clearly seen by contrasting its characteristics with those of less equivocal forms of discourse such as a stop sign or a military command.[41] In these examples, no response is expected beyond obedience, no circumstances envisioned that would mitigate the force of the imperatives. They derive their authority from the structure of power that stands behind them, and the fact that their authors are anonymous or diffused through a chain of command does not limit their effectiveness. But the *parabasis* is not so simple, for here it makes a difference *who* is speaking if it is necessary to assign some greater authority to the words of the author over the opinions of his characters. Put simply, as the epigrams to this chapter suggest, the fact that it is the chorus who speak in the poet's name necessarily transforms the dialogic situation by adding an extra layer of separation between the author and the spectators he addresses.

Moreover, this problem would not disappear even if Aristophanes himself should come on stage, for by so doing, he would become a character in a play, subject to judgment in the manner of all characters.[42] As Bakhtin writes (1981.332): "The speaking person and his discourse in the novel is an object of *verbal* artistic representation. A speaking person's discourse in the novel is not merely transmitted, or reproduced; it is, precisely, *artistically represented*" (emphasis in original). The distance between author and audience might *seem* less than it is as a result of the diffusion of his message through Dikaiopolis and the various comic choruses, but that effect would be a testimony to Aristophanes' mimetic skill, not an essential alteration of the separation between speaker and

receiver that is codified in the aesthetic form of the drama.[43] The fact that Aristophanes does not appear in his plays as Aristophanes is no doubt largely determined by the conventions of Athenian comedy, but the separation between author and audience would be no less real even if that were not the case,[44] for the space that remains between author and spectator introduces into the exchange ambivalence that cannot be removed. Aristophanes speaks through his representatives, but nevertheless remains absent from the stage, leaving the choruses' remarks in his name always in quotation marks.

This ambivalent positioning of the author that results from Old Comedy's institutional and generic structure doubtless presented limitations to the self-expression of Aristophanes. At the same time, it offered to him unique opportunities and possibly legal immunity from other kinds of constraint (Halliwell 1991.48–70). By introducing into the text a kind of radical uncertainty, however, the *parabasis* also limits the degree to which it can be used effectively as evidence concerning the intentions of the author; parabatic assertions cannot be said to have any intrinsic superiority as evidence over those coming from other parts of the play. As a result, the *parabasis* exhibits the same phenomena that we see elsewhere in Aristophanes: assertions are made, charges leveled, and preferences expressed only to be overturned or subverted, thus creating a dialogic tension that is never resolvable.

Reading the *parabasis* as ambivalent and especially conflicted has important ramifications. The *parabasis* of *Wasps* is full of the "quotation marks" that I have been describing. Further, there is an important intertextual dimension that links it with the *parabasis* of *Clouds*, the very play it both implicitly critiques and explicitly lionizes. Inasmuch as the "*Clouds parabasis*" is not the *parabasis* of the *Clouds* of 423 at all but the revised version probably composed after the production of *Wasps*, it is, effectively, a doublet of the *Wasps parabasis*, providing, like the *Wasps parabasis*, a retrospective look at the reception of the original *Clouds*. The essential homogeneity of these two responses on the level of content (the defeat of *Clouds* reflects poorly on Athens), as well as the doppelgänger effect produced by the duplication of form, suggests an unshakable alliance between aesthetic concerns and comic technique in the two plays. At the same time, these double-voiced utterances by the chorus/author together with their own intertextual resonances create representational contradictions that Aristophanes skillfully exploits to produce the dynamic effects he appears to seek. Let us turn now to the *parabasis* of *Wasps* to see these processes at work.

The interposition of the voice of the chorus between the poet and the audience discussed above has important consequences in this passage. The chorus clearly represents and relates opinions that the poet—sincerely or not—wants to communicate, but their style of reporting calls into doubt everything that it introduces. We may note, for example, the proliferation of φησίν, "he says," which occurs six times in the thirty-five lines quoted above.[45] On the one hand, of course, such expressions are gestures affirming the authenticity of a discourse and, as such, constitute unproblematic filler that contributes to the play's "reality effect" ("We're just passing along a message").

On the other, however, such gestures, especially when repeated, suggest precisely the opposite of what is being said.[46] By not taking credit for the veracity of the poet's words, the chorus' overly scrupulous repetition of φησίν points to the possibility of falsification on the part of the poet and has the effect of putting the entire contents of their speech "under erasure," affirmed and denied in the same action.[47] This is clear from the beginning of the *parabasis*. The chorus affirms the desire of the poet (ἐπιθυμεῖ, 1016) to blame the audience in its own voice. They do not say that he is justified in doing so, for as soon as they mention the general charge that the poet has been wronged (ἀδικεῖσθαι, 1017), they qualify it with φησίν, suggesting the possibility that he has not been wronged at all[48] or, at least, that his characterization of his experience of *adikia* is exaggerated or otherwise badly expressed.[49]

Thus the use of φησίν by the chorus to report the speech of the poet introduces into the *parabasis* an irreducible ambivalence that one suspects is extremely useful to Aristophanes in that it allows him to introduce a buffer between himself and the audience. Thus liberated to a degree, both from the inhibitions against speaking critically of those who will judge his work and from the limitations that the personal history of a writer imposes when he/she writes in the first person, Aristophanes is able to represent "himself" with greater freedom, although not necessarily with corresponding veracity.[50]

The subsequent appearances of φησίν intensify the effects of the first and continue to cast doubt upon the veracity of the report. The second φησίν (1024) precedes ἐπαρθείς, literally "raised up," and therefore "arrogant." ἐπαρθείς is used to describe the quality that would naturally enough have accompanied Aristophanes' stunning success.[51] This statement reprises with emphasis the vocabulary of the previous line, in which Aristophanes was said to have been ἀρθείς . . . μέγας, "greatly elevated."

In this context, then, the appearance of φησίν, in addition to any affirmative value it might exert, draws attention to the possible truthfulness of what is being denied. To begin with, it implies the existence of another making the charge. Otherwise the denial itself would be unnecessary. Further, to say "I didn't become arrogant" is to abrogate to oneself the privilege of making a judgment usually reserved for others; it is hardly an expression of humility nor particularly convincing. Even more importantly, the denial of one's arrogance belongs to the same species as the answer to the question as "Are you still overeating?" To address the topic at all, even in a vociferous denial (as here), is to concede its partial or potential truth as something plausible enough to require denial.

Moreover, the effects of third-person reporting here are similar to those described for the previous appearance of φησίν, for the chorus' assertion that "the poet says that he didn't become arrogant" obviously cuts two ways, one to suggest that, in fact, he didn't, the other to imply that his claim is only the result of self-delusion or bad faith ("he *says* that . . . but others affirm . . .").

Similar arguments could be made for the other occurrences of φησίν in the *Wasps parabasis*, where Aristophanes' susceptibility to persuasion (1027), fear, and venality (1036) is denied, while his characteristic determination only to go after big fish like Cleon is affirmed (1029), along with his determination to assault the new education (1037). The passage is capped by the report of the poet's table-pounding oath at 1046–47 that the audience has never heard better verses than those of *Clouds*. The violence of this declaration, in the context of the state of uncertainty introduced by the reported discourse, as well as the chorus' silence on the matter, puts this emphatic expression of authorial opinion into serious doubt as well.[52]

Having considered the problematic character of the *parabasis* in general, we can turn to the *Clouds parabasis*, which, to the degree possible given the limits of the form, offers an emphatic confirmation of the *Wasps parabasis* already examined. I continue by quoting the relevant *Clouds* passage (518–62):

ὦ θεώμενοι κατερῶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθέρως
τἀληθῆ νὴ τὸν Διόνυσον τὸν ἐκθρέψαντά με.
οὕτω νικήσαιμί τ' ἐγὼ καὶ νομιζοίμην σοφός, 520
ὡς ὑμᾶς ἡγούμενος εἶναι θεατὰς δεξιοὺς
καὶ ταύτην σοφώτατ' ἔχειν τῶν ἐμῶν κωμῳδιῶν
πρώτους ἠξίωσ' ἀναγεῦσ' ὑμᾶς, ἣ παρέσχε μοι

ἔργον πλεῖστον· εἶτ' ἀνεχώρουν ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν φορτικῶν
ἡττηθεὶς οὐκ ἄξιος ὤν· ταῦτ' οὖν ὑμῖν μέμφομαι
τοῖς σοφοῖς, ὧν οὕνεκ' ἐγὼ ταῦτ' ἐπραγματευόμην.
ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὡς ὑμῶν ποθ' ἑκὼν προδώσω τοὺς δεξιούς.
ἐξ ὅτου γὰρ ἐνθάδ' ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν οἷς ἡδὺ καὶ λέγειν,
ὁ σώφρων τε χὠ καταπύγων ἄριστ' ἠκουσάτην,
κἀγώ, παρθένος γὰρ ἔτ' ἦν, κοὐκ ἐξῆν πώ μοι τεκεῖν,
ἐξέθηκα, παῖς δ' ἑτέρα τις λαβοῦσ' ἀνείλετο,
ὑμεῖς δ' ἐξεθρέψατε γενναίως κἀπαιδεύσατε·
ἐκ τούτου μοι πιστὰ παρ' ὑμῖν γνώμης ἔσθ' ὅρκια.
νῦν οὖν Ἡλέκτραν κατ' ἐκείνην ἦδ' ἡ κωμῳδία
ζητοῦσ' ἦλθ', ἤν που 'πιτύχῃ θεαταῖς οὕτω σοφοῖς·
γνώσεται γάρ, ἥνπερ ἴδῃ, τἀδελφοῦ τὸν βόστρυχον.
ὡς δὲ σώφρων ἐστὶ φύσει σκέψασθ'· ἥτις πρῶτα μὲν
οὐδὲν ἦλθε ῥαψαμένη σκυτίον καθειμένον
ἐρυθρὸν ἐξ ἄκρου παχύ, τοῖς παιδίοις ἵν' ᾖ γέλως·
οὐδ' ἔσκωψε τοὺς φαλακρούς, οὐδὲ κόρδαχ' εἵλκυσεν,
οὐδὲ πρεσβύτης ὁ λέγων τἄπη τῇ βακτηρίᾳ
τύπτει τὸν παρόντ' ἀφανίζων πονηρὰ σκώμματα,
οὐδ' εἰσῆξε δᾷδας ἔχουσ', οὐδ' ἰοὺ ἰοὺ βοᾷ,
ἀλλ' αὐτῇ καὶ τοῖς ἔπεσιν πιστεύουσ' ἐλήλυθεν.
κἀγὼ μὲν τοιοῦτος ἀνὴρ ὢν ποιητὴς οὐ κομῶ,
οὐδ' ὑμᾶς ζητῶ 'ξαπατᾶν δὶς καὶ τρὶς ταὔτ' εἰσάγων,
ἀλλ' ἀεὶ καινὰς ἰδέας ἐσφέρων σοφίζομαι,
οὐδὲν ἀλλήλαισιν ὁμοίας καὶ πάσας δεξιάς·
ὅς μέγιστον ὄντα Κλέων' ἔπαισ' ἐς τὴν γαστέρα,
κοὐκ ἐτόλμησ' αὖθις ἐπεμπηδῆσ' αὐτῷ κειμένῳ.
οὗτοι δ', ὡς ἅπαξ παρέδωκεν λαβὴν Ὑπέρβολος,
τοῦτον δείλαιον κολετρῶσ' ἀεὶ καὶ τὴν μητέρα.
Εὔπολις μὲν τὸν Μαρικᾶν πρώτιστον παρείλκυσεν
ἐκστρέψας τοὺς ἡμετέρους Ἱππέας κακὸς κακῶς,
προσθεὶς αὐτῷ γραῦν μεθύσην τοῦ κόρδακος οὕνεχ, ἣν
Φρύνιχος πάλαι πεποίηχ', ἣν τὸ κῆτος ἤσθιεν.
εἶθ' Ἑρμιππος αὖθις ἐποίησεν εἰς Ὑπέρβολον,
ἄλλοι τ' ἤδη πάντες ἐρείδουσιν εἰς Ὑπέρβολον,
τὰς εἰκοὺς τῶν ἐγχέλεων τὰς ἐμὰς μιμούμενοι.
ὅστις οὖν τούτοισι γελᾷ, τοῖς ἐμοῖς μὴ χαιρέτω·
ἢν δ' ἐμοὶ καὶ τοῖσιν ἐμοῖς εὐφραίνησθ' εὐρήμασιν,
ἐς τὰς ὥρας τὰς ἑτέρας εὖ φρονεῖν δοκήσετε.

O spectators, I will speak the truth to you freely,
By Dionysus who raised me.
Thus may I be victorious and be regarded as wise,
Since considering you to be clever viewers,
And this to be the wisest of my comedies
(One that cost me the most labor),
I thought it right to give you a taste first.
But after that I retired, having been beaten by vulgar men, not rightly.
On account of this, I blame those of you who are wise,
You for whom I did these things.
But not even in this way will I willingly betray the clever,
Ever since here the moderate and worthless brothers was judged best
By men whose names it is sweet to mention.
And I, still a maiden and not yet allowed to give birth,
Exposed it, and some other girl who picked it up claimed it as her own.
You raised it nobly and educated it.
Ever since then, there have been trustworthy pledges of understanding between us.
And now this comedy, like the famous Electra,
Comes looking to find somewhere spectators so wise,
For she will recognize the hair of her brother if she sees it.
And consider how moderate it is by nature, who first
Came onstage without a thick leather phallus hanging down, red at the tip, to make the boys laugh.
Nor does she mock bald men or dance a kordax,
Nor does an old man strike a bystander with his stick
While he gives his lines, since he banishes low humor,
Nor does anyone rush in with torches or shout "Ow, Ow!"
But she has entered trusting in herself and her verses.
And I am the sort of poet who doesn't grow my hair,
Nor do I try to trick you by bringing on the same thing two or three times,
But I always contrive to introduce new ideas,
None like the others and all clever.
I hit Cleon in the belly when he was great
And didn't dare to jump on him as he lay there,
But once *they* got a hold of Hyperbolus,
They were always savaging the wretch and his mother.
Base Eupolis started it by bringing on Marikas
And did a bad job recycling my Knights,

> Since he added the old drunk woman to dance a kordax—whom
> Phrynichus had invented long ago—the one the sea monster tried to eat.
> Then Hermippus went at Hyperbolus again,
> And then all the others struck Hyperbolus,
> Imitating my eel joke.
> So whoever laughs at these things, let him not take joy in mine.
> But if you rejoice in me and my discoveries,
> You will appear to think well into the future.

Both the *Wasps* and *Clouds parabaseis* blame the audience for their lack of appreciation for *Clouds* while asserting Aristophanes' continuing devotion to the "clever" and the "wise," on whose support he claims to depend. At *Clouds* 525–26, the chorus says: τοῦτ' οὖν ὑμῖν μέμφομαι τοῖς σοφοῖς ("On account of this, I blame those of you who are wise"), a line that clearly recalls *Wasps* 1016: μέμψασθαι γὰρ τοῖσι θεαταῖς ὁ ποητὴς νῦν ἐπιθυμεῖ ("The poet wants to blame the audience"). Similarly, *Clouds* 522 claims that Aristophanes considered the original *Clouds* (ταύτην) to have been his wisest comedy, reprising the claims from the *parabasis* of *Wasps* (1047) that no one in the audience had heard better comic verses than these (i.e., those of *Clouds*). καινὰς ἰδέας (*Clouds* 547), the hallmark of Aristophanic comedy, is synonymous with καινοτάταις . . . διανοίαις (*Wasps* 1044) and with καινόν τι (*Wasps* 1053).[53]

Both passages also speak of betrayal, although in mirror fashion. *Wasps* 1044 accuses the audience of having betrayed Aristophanes, who had already promised to fight always on their behalf (1037), while *Clouds* 527 promises never to betray the clever. Further, both passages offer colorful characterizations of Aristophanes' early career, when he apparently wrote but did not produce his own comedies, allowing them instead to be taken over by other, more experienced, *komoidodidaskaloi* (Halliwell 1989). In *Wasps*, the metaphor is ventriloquism, as Aristophanes is said to have adopted the tricks of Eurykles, who could make his voice appear to come from others (1019).[54] In *Clouds*, Aristophanes has become a young unwed mother who gives up her "child," who is then adopted by another "girl" (530–31). Finally, both passages characterize Aristophanes as modest (*Wasps* 1024: οὐκ ἐπαρθείς vs. *Clouds* 545: οὐ κομῶ) and praise his courage in attacking Cleon from the outset (*Wasps* 1029–37 vs. *Clouds* 549–50).[55] This summary, while not exhaustive, demonstrates amply the close relationship between the *parabaseis* of *Clouds* and *Wasps* and testifies strongly to the continuity of interest that links them.

Both *parabaseis* also are closely related to *Wasps*' slave prologue. This subject has been discussed in general terms already in the context of Xanthias's claims about the moderate aspirations of *Wasps*. There I argued that the fine structure of Xanthias's speech belied its claims to reject comedy that is λίαν μέγα and that the putatively moderate aspirations of *Wasps* were, in fact, most closely connected with those of *Clouds*, the very play that the prologue affects to repudiate. A reexamination of the slave prologue shows even more emphatically the connections between *Wasps* and *Clouds*.

μέγα, the adjective *Wasps* claims to reject, itself is characteristic of the successful comic poet in Aristophanes' later self-description: "having been raised up great (μέγας) as no one ever among you" (*Wasps* 1023). That is to say, the state of being that *Wasps* rejects at the outset of the play is essentially the state that Aristophanes valorizes later in its *parabasis* as the earliest and most appropriate estimation of himself and his work.[56] The early appearance of μέγα, then, even in this covert form, already announces an important thematic component of *Wasps*, one that is expanded in both of the *parabaseis* I have considered.

Another link, this time between the slave prologue of *Wasps* and the *Clouds parabasis*, concerns the subject of vulgar humor, discussed above in the context of Xanthias's rejection of Megarian comedy as a fit subject matter for *Wasps*. Such humor occupies an important position in the *Clouds parabasis*, too. Both passages contain lists of "typical" Megarian scenes. *Wasps* refers to slaves scattering nuts and Herakles cheated of dinner (57–60). In *Clouds*, the catalogue is more extensive and includes a long series of πονηρὰ σκώμματα, "low jokes" (542) supposedly rejected by Aristophanes. Such catalogues implicitly function as critiques of Aristophanes' rivals, the purveyors of such fare, portrayed in *Clouds* as ἀνδρῶν φορτικῶν ("vulgar men," 524) and in *Wasps* as the authors of κωμῳδίας φορτικῆς ("vulgar comedy," 66). The catalogues also allow Aristophanes to introduce by *praeteritio* his own attenuated versions of the same jokes (cf. *Frogs* 1–15). This topic has been discussed above: *Wasps'* slave prologue asserts the modest ambitions of the play while, at the same time, positioning it as superior to all of its competitors.

In the *Clouds parabasis*, too, the catalogue has a critical function, although one more specific than that in *Wasps*. In *Wasps*, the audience is blamed for the defeat, an action described as a betrayal (1044), and the rejection of vulgar comedy is presented as an aesthetic preference alone. In *Clouds*, these two features are combined. As noted above, the rejection of the play is specifically linked to the vulgarity of Aristophanes' rivals

in the competition: εἶτ' ἀνεχώρουν ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν φορτικῶν ἡττηθεὶς οὐκ ἄξιος ὤν· "But after that I retired, having been beaten by vulgar men, not rightly" (524–25).

In addition to signaling the close association between *Clouds* and *Wasps*, the specific allusions to vulgar comedy and vulgar men have an additional significance, for the object of their scorn is, at least in part, clearly identifiable. The second *hypothesis* to *Clouds* says that Cratinus was victorious with *Wine Flask* while Ameipsias was second with *Connus*, the title of the play referring to a prominent musician, who later fell into poverty and whose name had become proverbial for "decay."[57] Both Cratinus and Ameipsias have an agonistic relationship with Aristophanes. Indeed, Ameipsias may be alluded to in the *parabasis* of *Wasps*, while Cratinus's play was, in part, a response to Aristophanes' tour de force in *Knights* (526–36), which represented Cratinus as Connus.[58] It is therefore likely that both are the primary targets of Aristophanes' ridicule here. Even more important than the specific identities of the *komoidoumenoi*, however, is the fact that Aristophanes' two plays give the appearance of speaking with the same voice on this topic. Both *Wasps* and the rewritten *parabasis* of *Clouds* use the topos of vulgar humor (and the men who love it) to express another link between the *Clouds parabasis* and the slave prologue of *Wasps*.

Finally, in all three passages (the two *parabaseis* and the speech of Xanthias), there is a proliferation of words having to do with cleverness, comprehension, sense, and recognition—all attesting to the shared aspirations of *Clouds* and *Wasps*. Such words, of course, abound in Aristophanic comedy, but they appear with a quite unusual frequency here. In the ninety-four lines with which we are concerned, forms of δεξι- appear at a rate of 53.19 per thousand lines, as opposed to the rest of the corpus of extant plays, in which they appear at a rate of only 3.50 per thousand (3.21/1000 if the ninety-four-line sample is excluded).[59] Even more striking differences occur for σοφ-, which appears in the sample at a rate of 74.46 per thousand, against 6.58 per thousand for the corpus as a whole (6.18/1000 if the ninety-four-line sample is excluded).[60]

These figures indicate the shared prominence of these specific ideas in the *parabaseis* of *Wasps* and *Clouds*, taken together with the speech of Xanthias in the slave prologue.[61] The effect of their presence is augmented, however, by the tendency of Aristophanes to group their appearances and by the general climate of judgment and discernment that pervades the passages. In the *Clouds parabasis* lines 520–27, each line has at least one word from one of the classes mentioned above.[62] An-

other cluster appears at 547–48, with the rapid appearance of ἰδέας, σοφίζομαι, and δεξιάς. Similarly, in Xanthias's speech from the slave prologue to *Wasps*, there is a concentration of judgment words in lines 64–66 with the appearance in successive lines of γνώμην, δεξιώτερον, and σοφώτερον. Finally, in the *Wasps parabasis*, another major cluster concludes the poet's address, with the appearance within a few lines of εὑρόντες (1043; see also *Clouds* 561), διανοίαις (1044; see also 1019, 1050), τοῦ μὴ γνῶναι (1045; see also 1048, *Clouds* 533, 536),[63] τοῖς μὴ γνοῦσιν (1048), σοφοῖς and νενόμισται (1049), as well as ἐπίνοιαν (1050).[64] All of these words share a general intellectual orientation, and the density with which they appear in the passages under consideration makes it justifiable to read across the borders of the plays, so great is the continuity of interest expressed within.

Having examined the high degree of interpenetration exhibited by the passages discussed above, we are now in a position to re-evaluate the programmatic claims Xanthias makes for *Wasps* in his prologue. The structure of that passage alone is enough to cast doubts on the moderate aspirations of *Wasps*, and it has already been suggested that, far from rejecting the "high" comedy of *Clouds*, Aristophanes exploits the failure of *Clouds* in order better to reaffirm its major concerns and aesthetic allegiances. Xanthias describes a tripartite classification of comedy, with high and vulgar Megarian occupying the extremes, while *Wasps*, λίαν μέγα (but with γνώμη), occupies the mean. That classification, however, breaks down almost immediately upon inspection. Megarian comedy, in addition to being a useful charge against one's rivals, is quite at home in Aristophanes, before and after *Wasps*.

Similarly, the term μέγα, introduced to distinguish the aspirations of *Wasps* from more ambitious plays, instead links it quite directly with *Clouds*, a crucial subtext for *Wasps* as a whole that, by virtue of the praise that Aristophanes bestows upon it (*Clouds* 521–22, *Wasps* 1046–47), has the best claim of any of Aristophanes' plays to aspire to something "big."[65] Thus the middle term introduced by Xanthias to describe the particular moderation of *Wasps* turns out to be useless as a term of practical classification. Instead, it functions as a rhetorical tool to position *Wasps* as the kind of play an audience, even a rather dull one, should like, thus allowing Aristophanes to distance himself from the Megarian comedy of his rivals, on the one hand, and from his own *Clouds*, on the other.[66] At the same time, in *Wasps*, he attempts to surpass *Clouds* in the use of popular vulgarity with the raucous Philocleon and to reinscribe subtly the concerns of the earlier play under a new name. The key differ-

ence between Aristophanes and his "inferior" rivals lies not in his avoidance of vulgar humor but in his insistence (however unsupported by the evidence) that he presents vulgar humor that is not simply a rehash of what worked in the past.[67]

This emphasis on novelty links vulgarity with the concerns of *Clouds* as well, and the false diffidence with which Xanthias introduces the *logos* of the play only affects to reject its true aspirations. By the time of the *parabasis*, two-thirds of the way through the play, the affiliation is explicit and the Wasp chorus presents an explicit defense, qualified though it is, of *Clouds*, whose "greatness" need not be concealed.

The degree of ambivalence introduced in the *parabaseis*, however, is not without effect. The undermining of authorial presence in the *Wasps parabasis*—and the degree to which the problematic *Clouds parabasis* duplicates it—work to reduce the effectiveness of the two *parabaseis* at establishing the credentials of *Wasps* both as a sequel to *Clouds* and as its enthusiastic supporter. These processes produce a profound internal fragmentation as they compel *Wasps* to negotiate the space between its ostensible claims of moderation and its inescapable sympathy with *Clouds*-style highbrow comedy, while offering no clear resolution to the problem.[68] At the same time, the play's tacit reaffirmation of comic "grandeur" is dialogized and made relative both by the explicit statements of the prologue and by the irreducible ambivalences of the *parabaseis* on which it depends.

In crafting the relationship between the plays in this way, Aristophanes exploits a strategy similar to the one discussed above in his characterization of *Wasps* as middlebrow. As in that prologue, where the explicit pronouncement of moderation was compromised at every level by *Wasps*' evident sympathy with *Clouds*-style comedy, so in the *parabasis*, the highly developed associations that clearly link the aspirations of *Wasps* with those of *Clouds* become double-voiced in the context of the ineradicable ambivalence that is inevitably produced. The result of this interaction, however, is not a reduction in the ability of Aristophanes to "say what he means." Rather, as I discuss in the Introduction, such an expression of ambivalence is the mark of a very successful rhetorical strategy *already* at work, one that allows Aristophanes to intervene at will, without constraint, and that allows him to reverse himself multiple times in the pursuit of popular, comic effects and overall rhetorical supremacy.

4 Questioning Authority

Homer and Oracular Speech

> The authoritative word is located in a distanced zone, organically connected with a past that is felt to be hierarchically higher. It is, so to speak, the word of the fathers.—Mikhail Bakhtin

> Laughter destroyed epic distance.—Mikhail Bakhtin

The two quotations above describe well the interaction of Aristophanic comedy with the genres that regularly appear within it. Like the novel, which, as Bakhtin comments elsewhere, relativizes the genres with which it comes in contact and "exposes the conventionality of their forms and their language,"[1] so Aristophanic comedy, too, exists in a specifically adversarial relationship with genres that share an "epic" sensibility.[2] For Aristophanes, it is, of course, tragedy that forms the primary point of contact, and, indeed, James Redfield argues that this opposition was institutionally maintained.[3] But other genres also make important appearances. Ralph Rosen documents the continuing influence of iambic poetry in Aristophanes and Cratinus in terms of their shared vocabulary and characteristic motifs, and he characterizes the relationship between Aristophanes and Cleon as an inheritance from the iambographers Hipponax and Archilochus, who also seem to have built a poetic repertoire out of invented (or traditional) personal enmities.[4]

The situation is somewhat different for epic language, which is noticeably uncommon in Aristophanes, especially considering the pan-Hellenic esteem of Homer. Some of the reasons, however, are not hard to surmise. The contiguity of comic and tragic meters, as well as their

shared dramatic structure and cultivation of the same festival audience, make tragedy an attractive target.[5] Further, mythological burlesque as it appeared in satyr-plays and early comedy may well have been less attractive to some later poets interested in positioning themselves as comic alternatives to tragedy and as avatars of "new ideas" (e.g., *Clouds* 547). Finally, figures like the Homeric Thersites hint at the existence of a less idealized anti-epic tradition coeval with the creation of the Homeric poems themselves, a tradition that would have lessened the effect of extrageneric attacks. Epic self-awareness can also be seen in the *Homeric Hymns*, the *Margites*, and the *Batrachomyomachia*, and such poetry doubtless implies the existence of an anti-epic tradition reaching further back.[6] In short, much of the work of epic deflation had already been done by the time of Aristophanes and, at least in the minds of many, by Homer himself. Together these forces may have contributed to the relative lack of interest in epic that we see in Aristophanes.

Epic, nevertheless, had been an important source of comedy, with the evident popularity of mythological burlesque continuing down into the classical period with Cratinus's *Odysseis*, whatever it specifically depicted,[7] and the scene in *Wasps* where Philocleon tries to escape from his house, Outis-style, by clinging to the underside of a mule.[8]

The use of epic language as an adjunct to comic style also plays a role in Aristophanes, and one finds isolated epic words causing disturbances in the linguistic field of colloquial comic diction.[9] Their effect is most commonly to produce an artificial elevation of language that stands in ironic contrast either to the general tone of the scene or to the speech-style of the particular character. For example, in *Acharnians*, ἐγανώθην (7) is an epicism that appears in a passage heavily influenced by tragedy and dedicated to a critique of recent and contemporary artists.[10] Its effect is to introduce a third term between the polarity of comedy and tragedy with which Dikaiopolis begins his speech, thus further crowding the field with a cacophony of generic voices that works more to the disadvantage of tragedy, with its preference for stylistic homogeneity, than comedy, with its enthusiastic acceptance of linguistic mess. At the same time, this affected quotation, which we must see as characteristic of Dikaiopolis, contributes to the portrait of a man whose boorish lack of sophistication makes his unswerving loyalty more a liability for Aeschylus than an unambiguous gain (cf. Dover 1968.252).

Sustained engagement with the epic tradition in the form of ex-

tended passages in dactylic hexameter occurs in five places within the Aristophanic corpus:[11]

1. *Lysistrata* 770–77, the oracle quoted by Lysistrata to encourage the women to persevere in their abstinence from sex.
2. *Knights* 1015–95, the duel of oracles between Paphlagon and the Sausage-Seller.
3. *Peace* 1063–1126, the attempt by the priest to interrupt Trygaios's sacrifice to the goddess Peace.
4. *Peace* 1268–1301, Trygaios's attempt to rehabilitate the son of Lamachos.
5. *Birds* 959–91, Peisthetairos's encounter with the Oracle-Seller.[12]

It is immediately apparent that I include hexameter oracles alongside Homer in the "epic tradition." While taking the two together may obscure differences in some contexts, for the purposes of this chapter, concerned as it is with the relationship of speakers to speech that is offered as authoritative, it is useful to consider these passages together. After all, it seems likely that the language of oracular pronouncement takes the shape that it does not as part of an independent development but in accordance with motives similar to those of the characters in Aristophanes who attempt to make use of dactylic hexameter oracles because it is rhetorically effective to do so.[13] The authority of the hexameter epic tradition is sufficiently well established to lend additional credibility to other types of speech that share that meter.[14]

To be sure, the relationship goes both ways. The appropriation of epic speech for explicitly oracular pronouncements validates epic's privileged role in Greek culture *and* undermines its authority to the degree that prophecy is not able to make good on its claims.[15] Similarly, epic suffers when oracles are touched by scandal, as in the case of Onomacritus (Herodotus 7.6), or are maligned by presentations such as those of Aristophanes, in which oracles have no function except to provide justification for spurious claims or invitations to a free meal.[16] Nevertheless, hieratic pronouncements derive much of their prestige from the form in which they are delivered by priests and priestesses who serve as the intermediaries between humans and the divine.[17] It makes sense, then, to group together an explicit engagement with the literary tradition (item 4 in the list above)[18] with attempts made by characters to bolster their own authority by piggybacking their cause onto that of the epic-oracu-

lar tradition (1–3, 5). In each case, a speaker attempts to assert rhetorical control of a situation by appeal to epic-oracular authority. The responses of other characters to these attempts are varied, ranging from near capitulation in *Lysistrata* to the employment of vigorous countermeasures, particularly the adoption of their own epic-oracular mode in the other plays. The result of this intense interaction is that the epic-oracular style, and the traditional prestige that accompanies it, is dissipated, distorted (as in the reinterpretation of Homer), and sometimes rejected outright (4). This fact is occasionally lost on the characters who attempt to use an epic-oracular style for their own purposes. Elsewhere (1–3), the decay of epic-oracular language is greeted without remorse, as its defeat means the removal of an obstacle to the successful completion of the hero's enterprise.

Lysistrata 770–77

Lysistrata is more adept at handling the implacable hostility of the Proboulos and the semichorus of Athenian men who denounce the women for having seized the treasury of Athena (387–706) than she is at restraining the desires of her fellow conspirators. Attempted defections, justified by lame excuses (728–61), threaten to undermine the sex strike that she has instituted to save Greece (Taaffe 1994.67). In an attempt to manage the increasingly rebellious wives, whose commitment to forcing an end to the war through abstinence was in doubt from the beginning (130 and passim), Lysistrata invokes an oracle that, she claims, foretells their success provided that they do not relent. She proceeds to quote it in full, interrupted once by one of the would-be escapees (769–77):

Λυ. σιγᾶτε δή·
"ἀλλ' ὁπόταν πτήξωσι χελιδόνες εἰς ἕνα χῶρον,
τοὺς ἔποπας φεύγουσαι, ἀπόσχωνταί τε φαλήτων,
παῦλα κακῶν ἔσται τὰ δ' ὑπέρτερα νέρτερα θήσει
Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης—"
Γυ. α ἐπάνω κατακεισόμεθ' ἡμεῖς;
"ἢν δὲ διαστῶσιν καὶ ἀναπτῶνται πτερύγεσσιν
ἐξ ἱεροῦ ναοῖο χελιδόνες, οὐκέτι δόξει
ὄρνεον οὐδ' ὁτιοῦν καταπυγωνέστερον εἶναι."

Lys. Be quiet, then!
"But whenever the swallows should flee into a single place
In flight from the Hoopoes, and abstain from phalluses,

There shall be a cessation of evils, and high-thundering Zeus
Will make low what is high—"
Woman A We'll be on top?
Lys. "But if the swallows revolt and fly off with their wings
From the holy temple, no bird in any way will appear to be more—
Lecherous."

Lysistrata's oracle contains a number of features that clearly identify its genre and tacitly stake its claim to special authority. Most obvious is the meter, which switches to dactylic hexameter with the beginning of line 770—a strong contrast with the end of the iambic trimeter line that Lysistrata completes after Woman A asks her to read the oracle.[19] In addition, the beginning is marked by oracular the ἀλλ' ὁπόταν, which is found beginning an oracle at *Knights* 197 and elsewhere.[20] Additional support for the special status of Lysistrata's speech is provided by her substitution of animal protagonists for human in the text of the oracle.[21] In addition, the style is elevated somewhat by the presence of the euphemistic φαλήτων (771), pleonasms πτερύγεσσιν (774) and ἱεροῦ (775), together with epic terminations for πτερύγεσσιν (774) and ναοῖο (775). Finally, τὰ ὑπέρτερα νέρτερα θήσει Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης (772–73) employs a common Homeric epithet of Zeus together with a sentiment that finds expression in the prologue to Hesiod's *Works and Days* (8).[22]

Yet Lysistrata's oracle is not simply Homeric pastiche. παῦλα is paratragic, perhaps even a quotation, and, although elevated, is at variance with its immediate context.[23] ἀπόσχωνταί τε φαλήτων (771), despite the elevation of φαλήτων noted above, undermines the allegorical image of swallows and hoopoes with its prosaic specificity. Add to this the fact that, as Jeffrey Henderson notes, χελιδών is a slang term for the female genitalia,[24] and the weird synecdoche that emerges further erodes the euphemistic quality of the oracle. The final line descends into bathos; introduced by the highly prosaic ὄρνεον (776) in place of ὄρνις,[25] it is then dominated by καταπυγωνέστερον, an expression of comic vulgarity with no place in the elevated language of animal oracles.

In the context of an oracle in which variously opposed registers of meaning are thoroughly interpenetrated, it is especially interesting to consider the presence of Lysistrata's hoopoe. As has already been mentioned, the presence of animals to represent humans in oracles is well documented, but this particular collocation of circumstances, with pursuing hoopoes and swallows fleeing from their embrace, immediately suggests a condensed version of the story of Tereus, Procne, and

Philomela.[26] Tereus was a Thracian king who raped his sister-in-law, Philomela, and cut out her tongue to prevent her from talking about the crime to her sister, Procne. Philomela, however, managed to reveal what happened to Procne by weaving the events of the crime onto a cloth. The sisters thereupon conspired to murder Itys, son of Procne and Tereus, and to feed his flesh to his father. Having succeeded in their revenge, the two sisters were pursued by Tereus.

This story, with the subsequent metamorphoses of Tereus, Procne, and Philomela into the hoopoe, the nightingale, and the swallow (χελιδών), had been presented at least twice in recent years on the Athenian stage: Sophocles' *Tereus* (date uncertain) and Aristophanes' *Birds* (414), which invokes both the myth of Tereus and the play by Sophocles.[27] As such, Tereus, like the oracle in question, is a figure of great ambivalence whose associations in *Lysistrata* cut two ways. He is, on the one hand, a noble, if terrifying, figure found both in early tragedy and in the Greek poetic tradition. This aspect of his character was doubtless only enhanced by his appearance in Sophocles' play.[28]

On the other hand, he is a comic figure, whom Aristophanes had presented in full bird regalia three years earlier (as opposed to the discrete verbal presentation of the transformation by Sophocles).[29] This presentation, moreover, while it eliminated, for the most part, the barbarous aspects of Tereus's character,[30] also deprived him of his tragic dignity by turning him into a tool of Peisthetairos's neo-imperialistic conquest of the universe.[31] In so doing, it impugned the Sophocles' version as well as the one inherited from the poetic tradition, thus preventing either of them from maintaining a dignified air that is not relativized by the presence of a laughable Aristophanic double.

Lysistrata's oracle differs from other attempts in Aristophanes to assert rhetorical control through the deployment of epic-oracular language. Unlike other Aristophanic characters who introduce this discourse, she achieves her purpose, which is to strengthen the resolve of the women to refrain from sex. Her interlocutor, however, employs a tactic that is potentially destabilizing and, indeed, is used to far greater effect in other passages. To Lysistrata's promise that Zeus will support their cause and "make low what is high," she responds ἐπάνω κατακεισόμεθ' ἡμεῖς ("We'll be on top?" 773).

This half line is significant in several important respects. First, Woman A's reduction of the political issues that concern the city to a problem of the body and its desires expresses an egalitarian attitude that is ubiquitous in Aristophanes.[32] Second, by interpreting the oracle as a

statement about sexual positions and affirming her continued interest in sex, Woman A tacitly rejects Lysistrata's characterization of Athenian men as Tereus-Hoopoes. Third, Lysistrata's dactylic hexameter oracle appears to end in mid line.[33] Aristophanes could obviously have written the oracle to conclude at the end of a line had he so chosen, but concluding Lysistrata's speech at this point allows Woman A's reply to cap the oracle with her own irreverent dactylic colon.[34] She thus effectively contests Lysistrata's position as the sole disseminator of oracular speech, offering her own parodic version based on the women's desire for sexual pleasure. In addition, by refocusing the attention of the audience on the satisfaction of bodily desires, she also undermines the ability of Lysistrata's oracle to be effective rhetorically.[35] At the same time, Woman A is only given a small role to play in *Lysistrata*, and her parodic intervention is not enough to contest significantly the authority of Lysistrata's oracle.[36]

Knights 1015–95

Woman A's appropriation of oracular speech is not allowed to disrupt events in *Lysistrata*. In the hands of other comic protagonists, however, such metrical mirroring is an effective strategy for countering attempts by their antagonists to stake out the linguistic high ground.

Oracular speech plays an important role in *Knights* from beginning to end and is subject to this mirroring throughout. In the beginning of the play, oracles are in the hands of Paphlagon, a thinly veiled image of Cleon, who is able to use them without scruple to control Demos, the personified city of Athens. With the arrival of the Sausage-Seller, however, an important change occurs. The ability of Paphlagon to use oracles at his discretion is left unchallenged, but the Sausage-Seller is able to negate Paphlagon's rhetoric by developing his own brand of oracular speech. The subsequent proliferation of authoritative speech dilutes its force and allows the Sausage-Seller to prevail just where Paphlagon had appeared to be invincible at the beginning of the play.[37]

The first reference to oracles is in the prologue. Slave A explains how the new slave has usurped control of the household (61–63):[38]

ᾄδει δὲ χρησμούς· ὁ δὲ γέρων σιβυλλιᾷ.
ὁ δ' αὐτὸν ὡς ὁρᾷ μεμακκοακότα,
τέχνην πεποίηται.

He chants oracles, and the old man is wild for the Sibyl.
And when he sees him acting like a fool,
He plies his trade.

Old Demos is very fond of oracles.[39] His actions are described by a desiderative verb derived from the noun Σιβύλλα, "Sibyl." Demos's longing for oracles plays an important thematic role in the play, as it offers to the Sausage-Seller an especially effective opportunity to approach the old man, provided that he is unscrupulous enough to exploit it.[40] At any rate, oracle-mongering is clearly represented as a seller's market in Athens, one that could be counted on to produce the Sausage-Seller if he did not already exist.

The symbolic value of oracles is clear from the importance the slaves attach to them at the outset and from their elation at stealing them from Paphlagon as he sleeps. For the time being, the stylistic features of the oracle are not of much interest to them. Slave A gives a prosaic summary in iambic trimeter that identifies the successive rulers of Athens after the death of Pericles as vendors of rope, cattle, leather (Paphlagon), and, finally, sausage (129–43). The summary itself tells a story of decline, as power in Athens passes inexorably to more vulgar leaders, reprising Hesiod's Five Ages of Men on the secular political level (Neil 1901.23–24). From their positions as unhappy men chafing under the tyrannical rule of Paphlagon, however, the slaves interpret the prophecy positively (Smith 1989.145). For them, any change that removes Paphlagon from power will be for the better. Buoyed by the oracle, they await the arrival of the Sausage-Seller with the highest hopes and greet him extravagantly as if a god (146–49).

Despite the slaves' initial indifference to the *ipsissima verba* of the oracle, the ensuing scene with the Sausage-Seller shows clearly that they are not completely unskilled in using the persuasive power of oracular speech. As the Sausage-Seller expresses doubt about the illustrious fate that is said to await him, Slave A recasts the message in oracular terms (193–201):

Δη. ἀλλὰ μὴ παρῇς
ἅ σοι διδόασ' ἐν τοῖς λογίοισιν οἱ θεοί.
Αλ. πῶς δῆτά φησ' ὁ χρησμός;
Δη. εὖ νὴ τοὺς θεοὺς
καὶ ποικίλως πως καὶ σοφῶς ᾐνιγμένος.
"'αλλ' ὁπόταν μάρψῃ βυρσαίετος ἀγκυλοχήλης
γαμφηλῇσι δράκοντα κοάλεμον αἱματοπώτην,
δὴ τότε Παφλαγόνων μὲν ἀπόλλυται ἡ σκοροδάλμη,
κοιλιοπώλῃσιν δὲ θεὸς μέγα κῦδος ὀπάζει,
αἵ κεν μὴ πωλεῖν ἀλλᾶντας μᾶλλον ἔλωνται."

DEMOSTHENES But don't throw away
What the gods are giving you in their prophecies.
SAUS. How does the oracle speak, then?
DEMOSTHENES Well—intricately and wisely riddled, by the gods.
"Yea, when the crooked-taloned leather eagle shall snatch
In its beak the foolish blood-drinking snake,
Then dies the garlic sauce of the Paphlagons,
And the god grants great glory to tripe sellers,
Unless they choose rather to sell sausages."[41]

His attention secured by the reference to λογία, the Sausage-Seller asks to hear about the oracle. Slave A chooses to interpret the Sausage-Seller's πῶς literally and describes it as having been spoken ποικίλως, "intricately," and σοφῶς, "wisely."[42] Both words indicate that the language of the oracle will be separate from the province of everyday speech and create the expectation that its meaning will not be straightforward. This scenario is not surprising in the context of the riddling oracles that occupy such an important place in Greek mythology and folklore, and it is likely that those in circulation in fifth-century Athens owed some of their vitality to the obscurity of their expression.[43] What is significant about the appearance of the words in the mouth of Demosthenes, however, is that they clearly seem to prepare the Sausage-Seller for a text of some obscurity and to identify in advance the slave as a source of explication and interpretation. In short, the oracle is introduced in such a way as to identify Demosthenes as an authority to whom the Sausage-Seller will have to defer.

The oracle quoted by the slave corresponds, at least in part, to its advance billing. Dactylic hexameter meter, oracular and dialectal formulae (ἀλλ' ὁπόταν), α'ι for εἰ (cf. *Birds* 978), the replacement of humans with animals, long compound words like "leather eagle" and "blood-drinking," as well as the presence of epicisms like κῦδος and ὀπάζε (Hope 1905.44) and the heavy, spondaic rhythm of the final line (cf. Neil 1901.33), all contribute to the serious tone of a text meant to be received with respect.[44] Having been alerted in advance to the difficulty of the text, the Sausage-Seller submits to the slave, who proceeds to explicate the oracle as he understands it. Thus the first use of oracular speech in *Knights* is a successful attempt by Demosthenes to influence the understanding and subsequent behavior of the Sausage-Seller, who, although pliant in the hands of Demosthenes at the outset, turns out to be a quick study. By the next appearance of oracles in the play, he will

have metamorphosed into a shrewd manipulator of sacred texts to further his own anti-Paphlagon program.[45]

The culture of credulity discussed above in the context of Demos's τὸ σιβυλλιᾶν, sibyllizing," forms the background of the contest between Paphlagon and the Sausage-Seller later in the play. Unlike the situation in Athens at the beginning of the play, when Paphlagon alone ministers to Demos's uncritical love of oracles, and unlike Demosthenes' use of an oracle to manipulate the Sausage-Seller (discussed above), the use of oracular language in the *Knights* agon is not at all one-sided. Indeed, much of it is played out through a struggle over who should control the language of oracular authority, and it is by his effective exploitation of its tropes that the Sausage-Seller is able to emerge victorious over his adversary.

At line 960, Paphlagon, in an attempt to prevent the stewardship of Athens from passing out of his hands, begs Demos not to act before hearing his oracles. Despite the Sausage-Seller's apparent ascendancy over Paphlagon in the lines that precede this request, the new situation is a dangerous one in which Paphlagon has already established his credentials and earned the fear of his fellow slaves (see 61–63). But the Sausage-Seller, sensing the "anyone but Cleon" sentiment of his admirers, adopts the conservative strategy of mirroring Paphlagon's tactics.[46] He immediately claims to possess his own oracles, thus signaling an active approach to oracular speech diametrically opposed to that of Demos and in line with the active manipulation of Paphlagon himself (see Smith 1989.145–46).

The contest that occupies *Knights* 1014–95 shows a much more complex engagement with the subject of oracles than did the first two passages we considered. In both *Lysistrata* and the prophecy of the four "sellers" in *Knights*, the oracle was introduced and distinguished from the surrounding text by means of clearly articulated requests for information and by the hexameter meter and partial epic diction of the oracle. In this passage, by contrast, the actively agonistic situation causes the boundaries of meter and diction to blur and initiates a dactylic free-for-all from which the Sausage-Seller eventually emerges victorious.

This blurring begins even before the beginning of the agon. As Demos orders Paphlagon and the Sausage-Seller to read their oracles, he reveals his own preferences (1011–13):

> ἄγε νυν ὅπως αὐτοὺς ἀναγνώσεσθέ μοι,
> καὶ τὸν περὶ ἐμοῦ ᾽κεῖνον ᾧπερ ἥδομαι,
> ὡς ἐν νεφέλᾳσιν αἰετὸς γενήσομαι.

Come now, read them to me,
Including the one about myself I like—
That I'll become an eagle in the clouds.

The final line of his request refers to an oracle quoted by the scholiast (*Knights* 1013a) that also appeared in Aristophanes' *Banqueters*[47] and included the words ἐν νεφέλᾳσιν αἰετὸς as well as γίγνεσσθαι. The relevant line reads: αἰετὸς ἐν νεφέλῃσι γενήσεαι ἤματα πάντα, "You will become an eagle in the clouds for all time." To accommodate the idea in an iambic trimeter line, Demos has been forced to rearrange the word order. The similarity of his language to that of the oracle quoted by the scholiast, however, together with the presence of epic terminations in the line, show clearly that his iambic trimeters are under the influence of another meter. Thus before the contest between Paphlagon and the Sausage-Seller begins, the firm divisions between dactylic hexameter and iambic trimeter have already begun to break down.

It is perhaps a foreshadowing of his eventual downfall that Paphlagon does not take advantage of the elevation of tone provided by Demos's invitation. Instead of responding directly in hexameters as did Lysistrata (770) or teasing the double audience within and without the play with a promise of the oracle's quality and complexity (*Knights* 195–96), he issues a prosaic call for audience attention *in iambic trimeter* before beginning his oracular presentation.[48] His unexpected drop in tone[49] inverts the shift in tone provided by the "oracular" trimeter of Demos (1013), but both are indicative of the blurring of boundaries that characterizes this section of the play.

The initial sections of the agon allow the Sausage-Seller to contest Paphlagon's control of oracular speech on two levels. First, he is able to offer counter-interpretations to the self-serving ones produced by his adversary and to imply that Paphlagon's reporting is both distorted and partial. Intervention at this level is crucial for the Sausage-Seller in that Demos seems unable to make anything of the oracles on his own and defers to others for explication and commentary. The following example illustrates well the tactic (1037–50; trans. Henderson 1998):

Πα. "ἔστι γυνή, τέξει δὲ λέονθ' ἱεραῖς ἐν Ἀθήναις,
ὃς περὶ τοῦ δήμου πολλοῖς κώνωψι μαχεῖται
ὥστε περὶ σκύμνοισι βεβηκώς· τὸν σὺ φυλάξαι,
τεῖχος ποιήσας ξύλινον πύργους τε σιδηροῦς."
ταῦτ' οἶσθ' ὅ τι λέγει;

Δη. μὰ τὸν Ἀπόλλω, γὼ μὲν οὔ.
Πα. ἔφραζεν ὁ θεός σοι σαφῶς σῴζειν ἐμέ·
ἐγὼ γὰρ ἀντὶ τοῦ λέοντός εἰμί σοι.
Δη. καὶ πῶς μ' ἐλελήθεις Ἀντιλέων γεγενημένος;
Ἀλ. ἓν οὐκ ἀναδιδάσκει σε τῶν λογίων ἑκών,
ὃ μόνον σιδήροῦν ἐστι τεῖχος καὶ ξύλον,
ἐν ᾧ σε σῴζειν τόνδ' ἐκέλευσ' ὁ Λοξίας.
Δη. πῶς δῆτα τοῦτ' ἔφραζεν ὁ θεός;
Ἀλ. τουτονὶ
δῆσαί σ' ἐκέλευ' ἐν πεντεσυρίγγῳ ξύλῳ.
Δη. ταυτὶ τελεῖσθαι τὰ λογι' ἤδη μοι δοκεῖ.

Paph. "There is a woman who shall bear a lion in holy Athens,
Who will fight for Demos against a swarm of gnats
As stalwartly as for his cubs; keep him safe,
Building a wooden wall and iron towers."
Do you know what that means?
Dem. By Apollo, not I.
Paph. The god was clearly advising you to keep me safe because
I stand for the lion you're to get.
Dem. And just how did you come to stand for lyin' behind my back?[50]
Saus. One detail in the prophecy he purposely isn't explaining to you
What's the one wall that's made of iron and wood,
Where Loxias ordered you to keep this guy safe.
Dem. Well then, what did the god mean by that?
Saus. He was ordering you to clamp this guy
In the five-holed wooden pillory.
Dem. I think that prophecy will very soon come true.

Paphlagon attempts to claim a special status for himself by invoking an oracle that is supposed to have foretold his birth[51] and by linking it with the famous advice of the Delphic Oracle that the Athenians should trust in their wooden walls to protect them from the advancing Persians (Herodotus 7.141). In so doing, he combines the strong literary pedigree of the oracle form with one of the most famous patriotic events of Athenian history. His self-identification as the lion is scoffed at by Demos, who takes the epic circumlocution ἀντὶ τοῦ λέοντος as a reference to an otherwise unknown Antileon.[52] The Sausage-Seller, however, does not challenge the veracity of Paphlagon's interpretation directly. Instead, he draws attention to the aspects of the oracle not specifically covered by the initial explication and uses them to convert the

oracle into an attack on Paphlagon. In this way, the "wooden wall" and "iron tower," which would not seem to require an explanation, are reinterpreted by the Sausage-Seller as a complex circumlocution for the stocks into which Paphlagon should be thrown.

This tactic had also formed part of the Sausage-Seller's attempt to undermine the first oracle, in which Paphlagon refers to himself as the "holy, sharp-toothed dog"[53] who guards the house of Demos (1017, with Paphlagon's interpretation at 1023–24), and whom the Athenians are instructed to preserve.[54] Here, too, the Sausage-Seller does not deny Paphlagon's claim to be the dog in question, but contests the claim's implications. Paphlagon intends to convey an image of the dog as a faithful guardian of his master in the manner of the *Works and Days* passage where Hesiod bids Perses care for (κομεῖν, 604) the sharp-toothed dog (κύνα καρχαρόδοντα, occurring, however, in a different metrical position from *Knights* 1017) to guard the house. In the hands of the Sausage-Seller, however, different aspects of the dog prevail. The Sausage-Seller's dog is a thievish snatcher of food, deserving punishment instead of praise. As a result, he is able to argue that Paphlagon's interpretation is partial and distorted (1025–26):

> οὐ τοῦτό φησ' ὁ χρησμός, ἀλλ' ὁ κύων ὁδὶ
> ὥσπερ θύρας σοῦ τῶν λογίων παρεσθίει.
>
> The oracle doesn't say this, but this dog here chews the
> Edges of your oracles like they were doorposts.

In both examples, then, the Sausage-Seller increases his influence and authority by setting himself up as a rival to Paphlagon in the proper interpretation of oracles. Further, by lurking in the exchange and intervening only when a favorable opportunity presents itself, he is able to "cap" Paphlagon's assertions, thereby undermining them and leaving his adversary without appeal.

Second, by skillfully introducing his own oracles, the Sausage-Seller forces those of Paphlagon to share center stage and to relinquish their rhetorical position as absolute loci of meaning from which no appeal is possible.[55] The Sausage-Seller's assault on Paphlagon the dog, begun in his reinterpretation of the first oracle, is continued in his own counter-oracle. He responds to Demos's friendly invitation to speak,[56] immediately launching into dactylic hexameters (1030–34):

> "φράζευ Ἐρεχθείδη κύνα Κέρβερον ἀνδραποδιστήν,
> ὃς κέρκῳ σαίνων σ' ὁπόταν δειπνῇς ἐπιτηρῶν

ἐξέδεταί σου τοὔψον, ὅταν σύ ποι ἄλλοσε χάσκῃς·
εἰσφοιτῶν τ' ἐς τοὐπτάνιον λήσει σε κυνηδὸν
νύκτωρ τὰς λοπάδας καὶ τὰς νήσους διαλείχων."

"Mark well, son of Erechtheus, the dog Cerberus, seller of men,
Who wags his tail while you dine and watches,
And when you happen to gape in another direction, eats up your delicacies,
And at night sneaks into your kitchen like a dog, and
Licks up the plates and islands."

The Sausage-Seller's contribution maintains the status quo for oracles, while innovating effectively elsewhere. His initial address, φράζευ Ἐρεχθείδη (1030), repeats Paphlagon's (1015) and appears to copy the style of oracular responses, at least as they appear in tragedy.[57] His language, however, undermines the gravity of the oracular style. He presents Paphlagon as Cerberus,[58] but gives him the abusive epithet ἀνδραποδιστής, literally "slave trader" (1030).[59] Equally prosaic is his extended representation of Paphlagon as a pet whose tendency to fawn hides his opportunistic thievery. He repeatedly refers to household objects: ὄψον, "relish" (1032), ὀπτάνιον, "oven" (1033), λοπάδας, "dishes" (1034), and compounds their bathetic effects with other colloquial expressions. Employing one of Aristophanes' favorite words, he refers to Demos's inattention as "gaping" (χάσκῃς, 1032) and describes Paphlagon's peculation with the bathetically specific διαλείχων, "licking all around" (1034).[60]

Demos is favorably impressed by what he hears and emphatically prefers the Sausage-Seller's oracle, at which point Paphlagon is forced to introduce another. This pattern of disruption, once set, provides a model for the Sausage-Seller's insinuation into the esteem of Demos and parallels the dialogizing effects of carnivalization on monologic forms like tragedy and epic. In the same way, by establishing himself as Paphlagon's equal in his ability to use oracular speech (and so control the behavior of Demos), he has effectively disarmed him.

This process is further demonstrated by the conclusion of the contest of oracles, which picks up speed as Paphlagon's desperation increases and the Sausage-Seller presses his advantage. Much of it is conducted in dactylic hexameter. At line 1051, Paphlagon is forced to counter the Sausage-Seller's reinterpretation of the prophecy comparing Paphlagon to a lion by appeal to yet another oracle (1051–53; trans. Henderson 1998):

μὴ πείθου· φθονεραὶ γὰρ ἐπικρώζουσι κορῶναι.
"ἀλλ' ἱέρακα φίλει μεμνημένος ἐν φρεσὶν, ὅς σοι
ἤγαγε συνδήσας Λακεδαιμονίων κορακίνους."

Trust it not; for jealous are the ravens that squawk against me.
"Rather keep in your thoughts the hawk and cherish him,
Who brought you in fetters the Spartan ravenfish."

Paphlagon struggles to keep pace. His comment on Demos's favorable reaction to the previous speech (1051) does not drop into iambic trimeters like the responses of Demos and the Sausage-Seller, but resumes the hexameters left off at 1040. In his haste to reclaim the rhetorical advantage, Paphlagon does not appear to notice that the oracle he warns Demos to disregard is, in fact, the one he quoted himself. His rhetoric exploits the allegorical tendencies of the oracles and invokes the high poetic tradition of Pindar in his characterization of a rival as a carrion crow squawking at his better, here a hawk, in place of Pindar's eagle.[61] Further, he returns to a favorite theme, and reminds Demos of his own part in the successful expedition to Pylos (cf. 54–57, 1005, 1058–59).

In his reply, the Sausage-Seller continues his practice of basing his own speech on that of his antagonist. He, too, responds in dactylic hexameter. Beginning with the charge that Paphlagon must have been drunk when he agreed to go to Pylos, he continues by denigrating the oracle proper, specifically Paphlagon-Cleon's great military exploit. To do so, he makes use of his own branch of the epic tradition. He quotes an epic proverb from the *Little Iliad*: "A woman could also carry a burden if a man loaded it on."[62] In this way, the Sausage-Seller produces a double dose of hexameter authority: not only oracle-quoting but also the multiform resources of the greater epic tradition.

Having been unsuccessful, at least initially, in focusing the debate on his role in the Pylos expedition, Paphlagon responds in dactylic hexameter with a protracted riddle about various places in the Peloponnesus called Pylos. The riddle requires him to recast Pylos three times in one line, and, although he is interrupted before he finishes, his introduction of the riddle allows him to pronounce the magic name two additional times (1059–60). But he is able to draw advantage neither from his hexameters nor from the scene of his great exploit. Thanks, perhaps, to the overuse of the oracular mode by Paphlagon and the Sausage-Seller, even Demos can speak in dactylic hexameter. He interrupts and completes Paphlagon's line, setting up the Sausage-Seller's pun that converts Paphlagon's Pylos into a quantity of tubs (πύελοι) snatched from the public baths. Once again, the attempt to use oracular speech to carry authority fails due to the ability of the Sausage-Seller to deflate

the tactic both by pointing to the spuriousness of Paphlagon's attempt and by multiplying the number of possibilities with his own counter-interpretations and his own oracles.

The tactics discussed above serve to increase the Sausage-Seller's prestige vis-à-vis Paphlagon's. At the same time, however, the duel as a whole brings about a decline of oracular authority, as its bifurcation on the stage removes the supernatural aura that goes with speech that appears to originate from a single source and can therefore be presented as a unique divine revelation. In so doing, to return to the pair of quotations with which this chapter began, the bifurcation of oracular speech into that of Paphlagon and that of the Sausage-Seller (even of Demos at 1061) parallels the process Bakhtin describes by which the novel (here, comedy) interjects "semantic openendedness" into valorized categories like the speech of the gods. The result is a situation in which authority is unable to maintain its stability in the face of a new pretender who is able and, more importantly, willing to seek influence by employing the same tactics. Thus the Sausage-Seller, by mirroring the tactics of Paphlagon in most respects—and by surpassing him in a few—is able to supplant him in the service of Demos.[63]

Peace 1063–1126

Dactylic hexameter figures significantly in *Peace* in two quite different ways. First, as in *Lysistrata* and *Knights*, dactylic hexameters are part of a tactical move by one character to assert control over the comic situation, as the oracle-seller Hierocles attempts first to frustrate, then to co-opt the new world order of Trygaios. Second, they appear in the final scene of the play where the revelry brought about by the restoration of the goddess Peace and the marriage of Trygaios to Opora, "Harvest," is threatened by the attempted reinstitution of "warlike" Homeric poetry. In both cases, Trygaios succeeds in maintaining control of the rhetorical situation—and thus prevents the traditional authority of hexameter poetry from taking hold—not simply by denying the authority of epic speech but by dramatizing it. As in *Knights*, where the spirited struggle for control over oracular speech engaged in by the Sausage-Seller and Paphlagon had the overall effect of diluting the rhetorical power of oracular speech, so here the direct participation of Trygaios in the struggle over who will control language hits at the ability of hexameter poetry to control normative behavior on the level of form and content.

In addition, both in this section and the one that follows, Homeric

poetry itself appears as an unstable category in the play. As used against Hierocles to bolster Trygaios's claim to be able to sacrifice to Peace, Homeric language extols the virtues of the quiet life away from the battlefield (1090–93, 1097–98) and is a force for peace among the Greeks. In the mouth of Lamachos's son, however, Homer is the poet of war and is therefore rejected by Trygaios. This juxtaposition of rival "Homers" reveals a discontinuity that is unresolved within the play's logic of expediency. Two important consequences follow from the necessary dialogization of the two Homers. First, the juxtaposition of these two incompatible representations reminds us of how precarious the appeal to Homer by a proponent of peace is. Second, the instability of Homeric speech as well as the contradictory uses to which it can be put contribute to the general Aristophanic program of displacing Homer from a privileged place of authority. If Homer can be invoked to prove everything, his special value disappears and his authoritative text becomes a comic cipher.[64]

As Trygaios prepares to sacrifice to the goddess Peace after her successful rescue from captivity, he is interrupted by the arrival of Hierocles, the oracle-seller, an historical individual known to us from a variety of contemporary sources (1045).[65] He is represented here as a supporter of the war (1049), motivated by a desire to preserve the status quo with regard to the war, a situation that guarantees him honor, esteem, and free meals in the Prytaneum (1084–85), but he is also opportunistic and will not object strenuously to the new dispensation, provided he gets a share of the bounty.[66] Above all, he assumes that his status as chresmologue will be sufficient to affect the outcome of the confrontation with Trygaios.

Hierocles attempts to gain control of what he regards as an unauthorized sacrifice. His first words serve to broadcast his intentions by displaying his expertise and implying that Trygaios's ritual preparations are defective. The technical specificity of his opening question sets the tone: τίς ἡ θυσία ποθ' αὑτηὶ καὶ τῷ θεῶν; "What sacrifice can this be and to what god" (1052)?[67] When his requests for information are ignored, he attempts to insert himself into the ritual (1056, 1057–58, 1059,[68] 1060) by offering suggestions and raising new questions that are either ignored or rejected.

The answering tactics employed by Trygaios at the outset are simple. He proposes to the slave that they pretend not to see Hierocles (1051), whose comments, to the degree possible, are subsequently ignored. In this stratagem, Trygaios and the slave are aided by the need for pious si-

lence to accompany the ritual that they have assigned to their own care.[69] This decision prefigures Trygaios's later appropriation of oracular language, freeing it from the exclusive self-interested care of Hierocles and his kind (see also Smith 1989.143). Like the Woman C who hijacks Lysistrata's oracle to bring the highfalutin diction of Lysistrata back to the issue of sexual pleasure (the key element that motivates the sex strike to begin with), Trygaios's tendency to ignore Hierocles comes in the context of Trygaios's overall preoccupation with food.[70] When ignoring Hierocles is not possible, Trygaios invokes concern for the ritual to reject outright the chresmologue's participation (1058, 1060, 1061–62), until his admission that the sacrifice is to Peace (1062) provokes a new outburst from Hierocles and alters the structure of their altercation.[71] At the same time, the opening of the scene with Hierocles sets the stage for much of what follows in its representation of Hierocles as a character attempting to assert authority and of Trygaios as one who resists.

The admission from Trygaios that the sacrifice is to Peace fundamentally changes the interaction between Hierocles and Trygaios. Until that moment, Hierocles' primary concern had been the fact that sacrifices were being conducted without the participation of a competent expert. What he regarded as Trygaios's oversight offered to Hierocles an opportunity to profit personally, and he was quick to seize on it. The revelation concerning the true nature of the sacrifice, however, brings about the realization that the chresmologue's entire way of life is at stake. Serious measures are called for. He immediately switches from questions about ritual technicalities to dire warnings in oracular dactylic hexameter. Trygaios's response to the power play of Hierocles is dismissive and consistent with his previous treatment of him. Nevertheless, his actions acknowledge implicitly the challenge posed by Hierocles' appeal to oracular authority. He does not allow him to complete a single hexameter line before interrupting, thus seizing control of the meter to avoid losing control of the situation (1063; trans. Sommerstein 1978):

Ἱε. ὦ μέλεοι θνητοὶ καὶ νήπιοι—
Τρ. ἐς κεφαλὴν σοί.

Hier. O how wretched and foolish are men—
Tryg. You can speak for yourself, sir.

From the beginning of the hexameter exchange, Trygaios attacks Hierocles' claim to speak a privileged language in two ways. First, he forces the elevated diction of Hierocles to share the stage with his own

dactylic hexameter interruptions and later extended replies, thereby contesting Hierocles' claim to be the *sole* disseminator of revealed "wisdom."[72] Second, he dismisses the value of Hierocles' activity altogether. Unlike the Sausage-Seller, whose attack on the oracular mode was indirect and who, in fact, made use of oracles in his ad hominem attack on Paphlagon, Trygaios, speaking from a position of greater power—he has, after all, freed Peace and is preparing to marry Opora, "Harvest"—enters into dactylic hexameter only to meet the rhetorical challenge of Hierocles directly and to express his incredulity at Hierocles' advocacy of a permanent state of belligerence between Athens and Sparta (1080–82).[73] He interrupts Hierocles four times at various points in the hexameter line before the latter is able to complete his oracle concerning the inadvisability of peace with Sparta.[74] In so doing, he reacts to the epic diction of the oracle[75] with a mixture of amusement (1066) and impatience (1072), before again ignoring Hierocles in order to concentrate on the cooking of the sacrificial animal (1074).

Despite Trygaios's assault on his authority, Hierocles continues his hexameter pronouncements gamely, ignoring interruptions and continuing his syntax as though it had not been disturbed. His words, however, show the strain of the battle. He is imagined as reading the oracle from a scroll, but the various interruptions of Trygaios at different parts of the hexameter line make this impossible, that is, the *vera dicta* of Bakis must several times be revised to suit the new metrical demands of the hexameter line.[76] His diction is altered as well. When Trygaios challenges his *adynaton*, "impossibility," concerning the marriage of wolf with sheep (1076a), Hierocles replies with an obscure statement that, whatever its full meaning, crosses genre boundaries in a way that is disastrous to his cause (1077–79):[77]

> ὡς ἡ σφονδύλη φεύγουσα πονηρότατον βδεῖ,
> κώδίνων Ἀκαλανθὶς ἐπειγομένη τυφλὰ τίκτει,
> τουτάκις οὔπω χρῆν τὴν εἰρήνην πεποῆσθαι.
>
> As the beetle in flight farts most foully,
> And the finch Akalanthis in her haste bears blind pups,
> So it is not yet the time to make peace.

Most significant in the present context is the degree to which comic language infects the oracular hexameters of Hierocles. As in *Knights*, the oracle is full of animals, but the nobility of the animal kingdom seems to have been reduced. A farting beetle is not an eagle in flight (cf.

Knights 1013). What is more, its farting is described as πονηρότατον, literally in the manner of a πονηρός, the low-born, stoop-to-anything-without-shame type whose presence is so often felt in Aristophanes (see Whitman 1964.29–36). Further, Hierocles' conjunction of defecation and a beetle (or whatever insect it is) suggests the dung beetle on whose back Trygaios (imitating the Euripidean hero Bellerophon) has ridden to Olympus. In particular, such a collocation recalls the memorable and protracted scene with which the play begins, in which the slaves shape cakes out of various types of excrement in order to feed the voracious beetle. Thus Hierocles' reference to the farting insect not only lowers his tone and undermines his conclusion in 1079, it also brings his speech explicitly under the sway of Aristophanic comedy (as well as tragic parody) so that its foolishness is revealed to its full extent.[78]

Trygaios's deployment of epic speech against Hierocles is strikingly successful, and Hierocles' oracular style continues to deteriorate under Trygaios's exposé of his cynical reasons for continuing the war (1083–87):

Ἱε. οὔποτε ποιήσεις τὸν καρκίνον ὀρθὰ βαδίζειν.
Τρ. οὔποτε δειπνήσεις ἔτι τοῦ λοιποῦ ᾽ν Πρυτανείῳ,
οὐδ᾽ ἐπὶ τῷ πραχθέντι ποιήσεις ὕστερον οὐδέν.
Ἱε. οὐδέποτ᾽ ἄν θείης λεῖον τὸν τραχὺν ἐχίνον.
Τρ. ἆρα φενακίζων ποτ᾽ Ἀθηναίους ἔτι παύσει;

Hier. You will never make the crab walk straight.
Tryg. You will never dine any more in the Prytaneum,
Nor will you have any occupation later.
Hier. You could never make the prickly hedgehog smooth.
Tryg. Will you ever stop fleecing the Athenians?

Hierocles rejects Trygaios's suggestion that Spartans and Athenians could rule Greece jointly with an indirect allusion to Spartan perfidiousness, "You will never make the crab walk straight." Trygaios's reply, however, changes the linguistic environment. He mocks Hierocles' appeal to the timeless truth of the animal fable by mimicking his words and applying them to everyday life, specifically to Hierocles' self-interest in continuing the war: "You will never dine any more in the Prytaneum," οὔποτε ποιήσεις vs. οὔποτε δειπνήσεις).[79] This response elicits a second aphorism from Hierocles that mirrors the first (1086). His intransigent repetition, in effect, parodies his earlier point and, in consequence, reduces its effect.

Further, the implications of his second appeal to unchangeable hu-

man nature are now ambivalent. Whereas his original statement had no application save to characterize the Spartans, the presence of Trygaios's reply at 1084–85 suggests that the only incorrigible nature is that of Hierocles himself. Thus instead of reasserting Hierocles' belief that duplicity is an unalienable Spartan trait, his second aphorism, "You could never make the prickly hedgehog smooth," now appears to refer equally to his own careerist mentality, an interpretation implied by Trygaios's exasperated question, "Will you ever stop fleecing the Athenians?" In this way, then, the attempts of Hierocles to control the rhetorical situation by exploiting the acknowledged authority of oracular speech are frustrated by Trygaios's skillful appropriation of dactylic hexameter for his own purposes.

Hierocles' behavior changes as his tactics are increasingly unsuccessful. He enters trusting that he will be accorded respect on the basis of his technical knowledge. Rebuffed, he switches to dactylic hexameter and reads (more accurately, improvises) an oracle in favor of continuing the war. When this strategy is likewise ineffective, he shifts ground again (still in dactylic hexameter) and challenges the oracular basis for Trygaios's own actions: he moves from being a passive reactor to the machinations of Trygaios to attempting actively to undermine him. Yet his challenge, however aggressively intended, is, in fact, a gesture of weakness that concedes the field to Trygaios and makes it inevitable that the rest of the battle will be fought on Trygaios's own terms.[80]

The beginning of the second round between Hierocles and Trygaios mirrors that of the first. There Hierocles asked what sacrifice was taking place and to what god (1052). Here at 1088 he continues, speaking in the dactylic hexameters that he had originally invoked to call attention to his special status. Thus although he relinquishes to Trygaios the lead in the conversation, he does not completely abdicate the authority he sought to claim for himself.[81] Nevertheless, from this point in the scene, Trygaios is free to articulate a vision of Greece at peace that is completely separate from the assumptions of the oracles circulated by Hierocles. For this task, Trygaios chooses to ally himself with Homer (1088–94):

Ἱε. ποῖον γὰρ κατὰ χρησμὸν ἐκαύσατε μῆρα θεοῖσιν;
Τρ. ὅνπερ κάλλιστον δήπου πεποίηκεν Ὅμηρος.
"ὣς οἱ μὲν νέφος ἐχθρὸν ἀπωσάμενοι πολέμοιο
Εἰρήνην εἵλοντο καὶ ἱδρύσανθ' ἱερείῳ.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ κατὰ μῆρ' ἐκάη καὶ σπλάγχν' ἐπάσαντο,

ἔσπενδον δεπάεσσιν· ἐγὼ δ' ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον·"
χρησμολόγῳ δ' οὐδεὶς ἐδίδου κώθωνα φαεινόν.

Hier. According to what oracle do you burn thighbones to the gods?
Tryg. The most noble one Homer made—
"Thrusting away the hateful cloud of war,
They chose Peace and made a sacrifice.
But when the thighbones had burnt and they ate the entrails,
They poured libations with wine, and I led the way."
But no one gave a shining cup to the Oracle-Seller.

Trygaios's choice of Homer as the source of the oracle that confers his authority to make peace might seem to require no explanation, given the importance accorded to the Homeric poems in the fifth century. Nevertheless, the choice does offer some distinct advantages that further Trygaios's rhetorical position. First, the choice of Homer is mandated by the rhetorical assumptions that underlie the meters employed throughout the scene. As we have seen, whoever is able to use dactylic hexameter effectively can control the action. We have also noted Hierocles' switch to dactylic hexameter after his initial move was countered by Trygaios. For Trygaios to return to iambic trimeter at this point, then, would be to cede the advantage that he had won by slugging it out with Hierocles dactyl for dactyl. In fact, he does not resume speaking iambic trimeters until he has used the oracular pronouncements of Hierocles to discredit his opponent thoroughly.[82] Sensing victory at that point, he switches back to iambics and invites the audience to a feast, a feast from which he pointedly excludes Hierocles.[83]

Second, as a general principle, Trygaios's reading of Homer here is faithful to an important aspect of the overall sensibility of the epic:[84] peace, although not always possible, is better than war.[85] The choice of Homer as an ally allows Trygaios to portray the contest between war and peace not as a personal battle between himself and Hierocles (trivial), nor between himself and the oracular tradition with its ever-falsifiable and constantly growing body of revealed knowledge (an unwinnable battle against a Hydra-like foe). Instead, by invoking Homer, Trygaios restages the conflict between himself and Hierocles as a conflict between genres, Homeric and oracular. In so doing, he presents the case for peace even more attractively, as epic (like comedy) is reinterpreted temporarily as the genre of the feast.[86] This generic attribute is dramatized by the ironic fortune of Hierocles, who chose his profession solely

for its steady access to rich food, yet who is left with nothing to do but eat the Sibyl (1116) and is driven off the stage by his "Homeric" rival.

Peace 1268–1301

Despite Trygaios's spectacular success at conjuring up the ghost of Homer to aid him in his battle against Hierocles, the idea of epic as a genre that glorifies war cannot be easily dismissed.[87] In this sense, Homer, and the warlike spirit expressed by numerous Aristophanic characters,[88] remains at large in the text of *Peace* as a discourse still capable of undermining the peaceful comic project Trygaios has set for himself. The penultimate scene of the play, however, confronts this issue directly. Trygaios addresses two boys who have snuck out of the house to prepare the songs they intend to perform at the celebration (1268–1301):

Τρ. ἀλλ' ὅ τι περ ᾄδειν ἐπινοεῖς, ὦ παιδίον,
αὐτοῦ παρ' ἐμὲ στὰν πρότερον ἀναβαλοῦ 'νθαδί.
Π. α νῦν αὖθ' ὁπλοτέρων ἀρχώμεθα—
Τρ. παῦσαι. 1270
ὁπλοτέρους ᾄδον, καὶ ταῦτ' ὦ τρισκακόδαιμον
εἰρήνης οὔσης. ἀμαθές γ' εἶ καὶ κατάρατον.
Π. α οἱ δ' ὅτε δὴ σχεδὸν ἦσαν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἰόντες,
σύν ῥ' ἔβαλον ῥινούς τε καὶ ἀσπίδας ὀμφαλοέσσας.
Τρ. ἀσπίδας; οὐ παύσει μεμνημένος ἀσπίδος ἡμῖν; 1275
Π. α ἔνθα δ' ἄμ' οἰμωγή τε καὶ εὐχωλὴ πέλεν ἀνδρῶν.
Τρ. ἀνδρῶν οἰμωγή; κλαύσει νὴ τὸν Διόνυσον
οἰμωγὰς ᾀδων, καὶ ταύτας ὀμφαλοέσσας.
Π. α ἀλλὰ τί δῆτ' ᾄδω; σὺ γὰρ εἰπέ μοι οἷστισι χαίρεις.
Τρ. "ὣς οἱ μὲν δαίνυντο βοῶν κρέα," καὶ τὰ τοιαυτί· 1280
"ἄριστον προτίθεντο καὶ ἄτθ' ἥδιστα πάσασθαι."
Π. α ὣς οἱ μὲν δαίνυντο βοῶν κρέα, καὐχένας ἵππων
ἔκλυον ἱδρώοντας, ἐπεὶ πολέμου ἐκόρεσθεν.
Τρ. εἶεν· ἐκόρεσθεν τοῦ πολέμου κᾆτ' ἤσθιον.
ταῦτ' ᾄδε, ταῦθ', ὡς ἥσθιον κεκορημένοι. 1285
Π. α θωρήσσοντ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα πεπαυμένοι—
Τρ. ἄσμενοι οἶμαι.
Π. α πύργων δ' ἐξεχέοντο, βοὴ δ' ἄσβεστος ὀρώρει.
Τρ. κάκιστ' ἀπόλοιο παιδάριον αὐταῖς μάχαις·
οὐδὲν γὰρ ᾄδεις πλὴν πολέμους. τοῦ καὶ ποτ' εἶ;
Π. α ἐγώ;
Τρ. σὺ μέντοι νὴ Δί'.

Π. α υἱὸς Λαμάχου.
Τρ. αἰβοῖ·
ἦ γὰρ ἐγὼ θαύμαζον ἀκούων, εἰ σὺ μὴ εἴης
ἀνδρὸς βουλομάχου καὶ κλαυσιμάχου τινὸς υἱός.
ἄπερρε καὶ τοῖς λογχοφόροισιν ᾄδ' ἰών.
ποῦ μοι τὸ τοῦ Κλεωνύμου ᾽στι παιδίον;
ᾄσον πρὶν εἰσιέναι τι· σὺ γὰρ εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι
οὐ πράγματ' ἄσει· σώφρονος γὰρ εἶ πατρός.
Π. β ἀσπίδι μὲν Σαΐων τις ἀγάλλεται, ἣν παρὰ θάμνῳ,
ἔντος ἀμώμητον, κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων—
Τρ. εἰπέ μοι, ὦ πόσθων· ἐς τὸν σαυτοῦ πατέρ' ᾄδεις;
Π. β ψυχὴν δ' ἐξεσάωσα—
Τρ. κατῄσχυνας δὲ τοκέας.

Tryg. But whatever you intend to sing, boy,
Stand here in front of me and read it.
Boy A "Let us begin now with younger men, O—"
Tryg. Stop!
Triply-wretched boy, singing of armed men, when we
have peace! You are certainly ignorant and accursed!
Boy A "And when they were very near to one another
They pressed together their oxhides and bossed shields."
Tryg. Shields? Stop reminding us of them!
Boy A "Then there was great moaning and vaunts of men."
Tryg. Moaning of men? You will weep, by Dionysus!
Singing of moans, and bossed ones at that.
Boy A But what *am* I to sing, then? Tell me what you like.
Tryg. "Thus they feasted on the meat of the bulls," and things like that.
"They laid out breakfast and ate these things with pleasure."
Boy A "Thus they feasted on the meat of the bulls, and unharnessed
the sweaty necks of the horses, since they were sated with war."
Tryg. Good! They were sated with war, then they were eating.
Sing about this, how they kept eating when they were sated.
Boy A "Then they girded themselves, when they had ceased—"
Tryg. Happily, I think.
Boy A "And they poured out of the fortifications, and a loud battle cry arose."
Tryg. May you perish most evilly, boy, you and your battles!
You sing of nothing but wars. Who is your father?
Boy A Me?
Tryg. Yes you, by Zeus!

Boy A I'm the son of Lamachos.
Tryg. Uggh! I was wondering as I listened if you weren't
The son of some battle-counseling and battle-weeping man.
Go away and sing to your spear carriers!
Where is Cleonymos's son?
Sing something before you go in. I know
You will not sing weighty business, for you father is prudent.
Boy B Some Saian man rejoices in the shield that,
Though a perfectly good weapon, I unwillingly left beside a bush—
Tryg. Tell me, little prick, are you singing about your father?
Boy B But I saved myself—
Tryg. And shamed your parents.

The authority of Homer is challenged on several levels in this passage.[89] First, the characterization of Homer as a poet of peace and feasting, an integral part of Trygaios's defeat of Hierocles, is tacitly abandoned here. It is replaced by a more critical view, according to which Homeric poetry—whatever its own inclinations—supplies rhetorical ammunition to unapologetic admirers of war and cynical profiteers alike. For this reason, Homeric poetry is incompatible with the new dispensation represented by the marriage of Trygaios and Opora, and is thereby rejected by Trygaios.[90]

In his rejection of the epic values promulgated by the son of Lamachos, Trygaios uses some of the tactics already practiced in the battle with Hierocles, especially interruption and metrical co-optation. Boy A, who will turn out to be the son of Lamachos, is not able to finish his first line—he is reciting the beginning of the *Epigoni*[91]—before Trygaios rushes in to interrupt, complete it, and then criticize its content. Yet the interruption is structured in such a way as to make the provenance of the quotation as clear as possible. All of the necessary syntax is expressed before Trygaios breaks in (his imperative παῦσαι, 1270, replaces the vocative Μοῦσαι of the original), thus giving the audience 5/6 of a hexameter line with which to recognize the meter and identify the poem about to be recited as the *Epigoni* or a generic cozener. Thus when Trygaios interrupts to reassert his rejection of hexameter poetry and to put a stop to this recitation, it is clear to everyone that the target is epic. It is also likely that many of his audience considered the author of the *Epigoni* to be Homer himself.[92]

By interrupting the recitation of Lamachos's son and completing his line, Trygaios again refuses to allow the control of hexameter po-

etry to remain the exclusive property of another. His diction, however, exploits comic usage and thus travesties epic style even as he exploits its rhetorical efficacy. κακόδαιμον and κατάρατον are staples of comic abuse, as is ἀμαθές γε at 1272.[93] The effect of this tactic is, of course, to block the ability of Homeric language to be felt as a privileged form of speech, both by employing it for purposes other than those for which it was developed—the recitation of narrative poetry—and by infecting it with the language and sensibility of comedy. Even more significant is the general sense of the scene, in which Trygaios uses hexameter poetry self-reflexively throughout to critique the content of what is represented as a typical Homeric scene. In this way, the ability of Homeric poetry to speak from a privileged position is undermined not only by the criticism of its content but also by the ability of Trygaios to use its own diction as a weapon against it.[94]

The critique of Homeric poetry is continued on a similar basis in the lines that follow, as the son of Lamachos recites and Trygaios objects repeatedly to the inappropriateness of his vocabulary of war in a time of peace. This tactic eventually causes the exasperated son of Lamachos to ask, "What *am* I to sing?" He asks Trygaios to specify the sort of (evidently epic) poetry he would take pleasure in (χαίρεις, 1279). This question inadvertently signals admission of a crisis that hits at the acknowledged purpose of heroic hexameter poetry to provide pleasure (χάρις) and that, therefore, deals a crushing blow to the prestige of epic.[95] If Boy A and the tradition he represents cannot effectively fulfill that condition, then the fundamental basis of epic's continued existence may also be called into question.[96]

This tactic of compelling Homeric language to work against its traditional interests is also at the center of Trygaios's final attempt to rehabilitate Boy A. Trygaios offers him the chance to reform, essentially along the same lines of Homer as a poet of the feast used in the encounter with Hierocles. Trygaios gives the boy three Homeric descriptions of meals as examples.[97] Although he turns out to be incorrigible, the boy appears to make progress at first, describing a welcome respite to a battle that Trygaios praises warmly (1284–85). The boy continues by describing the end of the meal and proceeds to narrate the resumption of hostilities. Trygaios, however, in a manner reminiscent of the Sausage-Seller's hostile reinterpretations of Paphlagon's oracles (1045–47), interrupts before the boy can complete his description and commandeers his equivocal language to suggest excessive feasting and drunken revelry instead of a return to battle.[98] He picks up Boy A's ἐκόρεσθεν, "they

were sated" (1283), first repeating it in context, then misconstruing it to refer not to battle fatigue but to excessive feasting (κεκορημένοι, 1285). Next he reinterprets πεπαυμένοι, by which the boy intends to refer to the end of the meal, as perversely referring to the battle, while taking θωρήσσοντ' metaphorically to mean "they girded themselves (with wine)."[99] This tactic is tacitly rejected by Boy A, who does not allow his narrative to be hijacked. His continuation, "They poured out of the fortifications, and a loud battle cry arose," leaves Trygaios with no recourse but to end his attempt at rehabilitation and ban him from the festivities. Thereupon, Trygaios abandons hexameter and reverts to iambic trimeter (1288). Nevertheless, his deliberate manipulation of Homeric diction has already created a world of epic feasting as an alternative to epic battles, and he turns the warlike Homer into a poet of rustic excess and pleasure. This development further erodes the ability of Homeric poetry to exert the kind of authority that characters like Hierocles and the son of Lamachos desire.

The epic solitude of Homer, in addition to being broken by its inclusion in comedy, is further compromised by its juxtaposition with Archilochus's shield poem, itself a parodic treatment of the epic mentality. The aesthetically elegant injunction to return home with your shield or on it is the standard of personal bravery expected of heroes in the *Iliad*, as is the assumption that the only movement in battle should be forward against the enemy. To be sure, this attitude is not monolithic even among the elite warriors of epic, and figures like Odysseus clearly consider various options. Nevertheless, the shield poem is important in that it does not consider retreat and the abandonment of one's shield as inherently shameful or the presence of shame as permanent. The narrator fully expects to fight again on better terms.[100] The possibility of flight, however, runs counter to the Homeric tradition and must be seen as a reaction to it. Moreover, Archilochus's elegiac couplets, although not identical to dactylic hexameter, are, nevertheless, composed of elements that are largely congruent. This metrical context allows the appearance in elegiac couplets of a wide variety of Homeric expressions, a fact that intensifies the sense felt by many readers that Archilochus is polemecizing with Homer over the proper attitudes and conduct of soldiers.[101]

By staging Archilochean elegy within *Peace*, therefore, Trygaios—not to mention Aristophanes, for whom the same thing holds true on another level—is able to counter the Homeric perspective valorized by Lamachos and his clan by compelling the idealized view of war found in epic to recognize the real-life contingencies of battle, where tactical

retreat is sometimes necessary. His juxtaposition of Archilochus with the martial sympathy of Lamachos's son thus contributes further to the dislodgement of Homeric poetry from its position of unchallenged superiority and indirectly increases the appeal of Trygaios's attempt to rehabilitate Homer as a poet of peace.

Trygaios turns to the son of Cleonymos, since he feels sure that from him he can expect a song without πράγματα (1297). Attaching the shield poem to the fictional biography of Cleonymos does not restore Homer to his position of unchallenged authority, however. Instead, the primary effect of Trygaios's rejection is to denigrate Archilochus by understanding him to sanction cowardice, whatever his original purpose may have been. Further, from the perspective of the late fifth century, anyway, the uniqueness of Archilochus's shield poem is generalized away by putting it in the mouth of Cleonymos's son. The self-serving "prudence" that the shield poem humorously explores is thereby converted into the defining family trait of a notorious *rhipsaspis*,[102] just as the attribution of Homeric attitudes to the son of Lamachos deprives Homer of his unique authority by associating his work with the unreflective impulses of a warlike family.[103]

Birds 959–91

Comic engagement with dactylic hexameter in *Birds* takes place in the scene with the Oracle-Seller (959–91), whose arrival in Nephelococcygia is one of a number of intrusions that threaten to disturb the serenity of Peisthetairos's newly founded city. In this way, *Birds* follows *Knights* and *Peace* in staging a linguistic agon alongside a dramatic one. The Oracle-Seller's appeal to oracular authority is similar to those of Hierocles and Paphlagon in that it is based on the assumption that the Oracle-Seller is the exclusive custodian of oracular speech—here symbolized by his repeated appeal to the contents of his "book"—and Peisthetairos is able to dispose of him using many of the tactics for contesting the authority of oracular language employed by the Sausage-Seller and Trygaios.[104]

The sacrifice in *Birds* marks the foundation of the new city and affirms dramatically the fact that the plans of the hero have been accomplished successfully. Here, as in *Peace*, the hero's success also produces obstacles that both symbolize the threat to the status quo represented by the hero and demonstrate once again that the status quo will be no match for the resourceful hero. In fact, this mini-drama is considerably expanded in *Birds*, as opposed to *Peace*, in that *Peace*'s Hierocles is re-

placed by two characters, a priest of Peisthetairos's choosing—whom he later rejects in favor of himself—and the Oracle-Seller, who attempts to employ oracular language to secure a place in the new city.

Like Hierocles in *Peace*, the Oracle-Seller first attempts to control the situation by implying that he possesses special religious authority. His call to stop the sacrifice (959) is followed by his larger claim to be in possession of an oracle regarding the new city, which claim Peisthetairos meets with skepticism (961–65):

Χρ. ὦ δαιμόνιε, τὰ θεῖα μὴ φαύλως φέρε·
ὡς ἔστι Βάκιδος χρησμὸς ἄντικρυς λέγων
εἰς τὰς Νεφελοκοκκυγίας.
Πε. κἄπειτα πῶς
ταῦτ' οὐκ ἐχρησμολόγεις σὺ πρὶν ἐμὲ τὴν πόλιν
τήνδ' οἰκίσαι;
Χρ. τὸ θεῖον ἐνεπόδιζέ με.

Orac. Strange man, do not treat lightly the affairs of the gods.
Thus an oracle of Bakis refers directly to Nephelococcygia.
Peis. And why didn't you prophesy this before I founded this city?
Orac. The god restrained me.

The Oracle-Seller's ἄντικρυς emphasizes his position as one having access to privileged information, as does his correct quotation of the new city's name. This information fails to impress Peisthetairos, however, and perhaps even prejudices his opinion of the Oracle-Seller in advance. He challenges the specific reference of the oracle to the city on the basis of its novelty—he has never heard of this prophecy—and on the suspicious timing of the Oracle-Seller's appearance. The Oracle-Seller's response to this objection is to add lamely that the god restrained him from speaking earlier.[105] Yet his reticence in describing the god's intervention limits his ability to appeal to the god's authority. It is not particularly surprising, then, that Peisthetairos, whose approach to the sacrifice has admitted some tolerance for established forms of religious authority, allows him to speak. Peisthetairos's easy indifference to his presence in Nephelococcygia does not bode well for the chresmologue's hopes for success.[106] Nevertheless, the shift to dactylic hexameter to present his oracle at least gives him the opportunity to deploy the full resources of his craft (968–91):

"ἀλλ' ὅταν οἰκήσωσι λύκοι πολιαί τε κορῶναι
ἐν ταὐτῳ τὸ μεταξὺ Κορίνθου καὶ Σικυῶνος—"

Πε. τί οὖν προσήκει δῆτ' ἐμοὶ Κορινθίων;
Χρ. ἠνίξαθ' ὁ Βάκις τοῦτο πρὸς τὸν ἀέρα.
"πρῶτον Πανδώρᾳ θῦσαι λευκότριχα κριόν·
ὃς δέ κ' ἐμῶν ἐπέων ἔλθῃ πρώτιστα προφήτης,
τῷ δόμεν ἱμάτιον καθαρὸν καὶ καινὰ πέδιλα—"
Πε. ἔνεστι καὶ τὰ πέδιλα;
Χρ. λαβὲ τὸ βιβλίον.
"καὶ φιάλην δοῦναι καὶ σπλάγχνων χεῖρ' ἐπιπλῆσαι."
Πε. καὶ σπλάγχνα διδόν' ἔνεστι;
Χρ. λαβὲ τὸ βιβλίον.
"κἄν μέν, θέσπιε κοῦρε, ποιῇς ταῦθ' ὡς ἐπιτέλλω,
αἰετὸς ἐν νεφέλῃσι γενήσεαι· αἰ δέ κε μὴ δῷς,
οὐκ ἔσει οὐ τρυγών, οὐδ' αἰετός, οὐ δρυκολάπτης."
Πε. καὶ ταῦτ' ἔνεστ' ἐνταῦθα;
Χρ. λαβὲ τὸ βιβλίον.
Πε. οὐδὲν ἄρ' ὅμοιός ἐσθ' ὁ χρησμὸς τουτῳί,
ὃν ἐγὼ παρὰ τἀπόλλωνος ἐξεγραψάμην·
"αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν ἄκλητος ἰὼν ἄνθρωπος ἀλαζὼν
λυπῇ θύοντας καὶ σπλαγχνεύειν ἐπιθυμῇ,
δὴ τότε χρὴ τύπτειν αὐτὸν πλευρῶν τὸ μεταξύ,"
Χρ. οὐδὲν λέγειν οἶμαί σε.
Πε. λαβὲ τὸ βιβλίον.
"καὶ φείδου μηδὲν μηδ' αἰετοῦ ἐν νεφέλῃσιν,
μήτ' ἢν Λάμπων ᾖ μήτ' ἢν ὁ μέγας Διοπείθης."
Χρ. καὶ ταῦτ' ἔνεστ' ἐνταῦθα;
Πε. λαβὲ τὸ βιβλίον.
οὐκ εἶ θύραζ'; ἐς κόρακας.
Χρ. οἴμοι, δείλαιος.
Πε. οὔκουν ἐτέρωσε χρησμολογήσεις ἐκτρέχων;

Orac. "But when the wolves and the gray crows live together,
In the same place between Corinth and Sikyon—"
Peis. What do the Corinthians have to do with me then?
Orac. Bakis speaks in riddles about the air.
"First sacrifice a white ram to Pandora,
and to whatever prophet of my verses comes first
give him a clean cloak and new sandals—"
Peis. Are the sandals in there too?
Orac. Take the book.
"And give him a bowl for libations and fill his hand with entrails."

Peis. Is giving entrails in there?
Orac. Take the book.
"And if, inspired boy, you do these things that I order,
you will become an eagle in the clouds,
but if you do not give, you shall not be a turtledove,
nor an eagle, nor a woodpecker."
Peis. Is this here too?
Orac. Take the book.
Peis. (producing another scroll) Evidently, the oracle is not like this one at all,
which I wrote down from the word of Apollo,
"But when a boastful man, coming uninvited,
bothers those trying to sacrifice and wants to share in the entrails,
at that moment it is necessary to strike him in the middle of the ribs—"
Orac. I think you're talking nonsense.
Peis. Take the book.
"And spare in no way even an eagle in the clouds,
not even if he is Lampon or the great Diopeithes."
Orac. Is this here too?
Peis. Take the book.
Get out of here! Go to the crows!
Orac. Uh-oh, I'm done for.
Peis. Go peddle your oracles somewhere else!

The Oracle-Seller's prophecy begins with several features of oracles that have already been noted: a beginning *in medias res* with ἀλλά, animals signifying humans, rhetorical *adynata* (both the cohabitation of crows and wolves and the proverbially atopic land between Corinth and Sikyon),[107] and predictions for the future (977–79). These features establish the generic affiliations of the oracle by linking it with the repository of traditional images and create a precise link to the newly founded city of the birds.

This latter purpose is sometimes accomplished only with difficulty. Thus πολιός, "gray," an epithet of wolves in the *Iliad* (10.334), is transferred to the crow, which Alan Sommerstein regards as a part of the *adynaton* in that "there are no steel-grey crows" (1987.262). Against this view, Nan Dunbar argues that the gray crow is the hooded crow, whose "pale-grey upper back, shoulder, and belly" distinguish it from the carrion crow and make πολιός an appropriate epithet (1995.130–31, 545). It may be true that the hooded crow could be presented to an Athenian audience as πολιός. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to suggest that

this was typically done, and the presence of πολιός, an epithet of wolves in the *Iliad*, suggests that the line represents an attempt by the Oracle-Seller to adapt traditional locutions to serve the new world order of Peisthetairos.[108]

The strain of adapting traditional motifs to the qualities of the new city is further shown in the following lines. The word Nephelococcygia does not appear in the prophecy, its metrical shape being impossible to fit into dactylic hexameter. For this reason, a circumlocution must be used, "between Corinth and Sikyon," a phrase that had come to mean "nowhere" owing to the contiguity of the territories of the two cities.[109] Applied to Nephelococcygia, however, the expression is startlingly obscure. Thus Peisthetairos's response, "What do the Corinthians have to do with me then?" requires the Oracle-Seller to connect the nonexistent τὸ μεταξύ with the air on which Nephelococcygia has been constructed. This arbitrary assertion is not challenged by Peisthetairos, who remains indulgent until the Oracle-Seller's request for gifts reveals his mercenary character. Nevertheless, the spuriousness of his assumption is indicative of the difficulties that the Oracle-Seller must undergo to maintain his authority in the face of Peisthetairos's challenge.

Unlike Hierocles in *Peace*, the Oracle-Seller does not appear to acknowledge any particular allegiance to a city, even if his adaptation of the "eagle in the clouds" oracle implies his familiarity with Athens.[110] His interest in the sacrifice is less conflicted, since he does not stand to profit from the maintenance of the status quo. Thus he may move directly to maximize the benefits he can receive under the new regime. He signals his intentions by naming Pandora as the divinity to be propitiated. Her name seems less significant from a cultic perspective than from the etymological one that construes Pan-dora to mean "all gifts." He proceeds to order the sacrifice of a white ram, attempting to replace thereby the goat (959) that had lent a distinctly bathetic tone to the sacrificial proceedings,[111] and to request, in addition, a cloak, sandals, and a share of the sacrificial meal. He concludes his oracle with a prediction for the future, somewhat comically addressing the full grown Peisthetairos as a youth (977). His promise that Nephelococcygia will be "an eagle in the clouds" if its purveyors of oracles are rewarded generously suggests that he regards an oracle predicting civic glory as a message especially attractive to Peisthetairos, who, by the end of the play, will reveal the full extent of his imperialistic vision. The same oracle is explicitly requested, after all, by the fatuous Demos of *Knights*.[112] If, on the other hand, they do not give, there will be no turtledove, eagle, or woodpecker

in the land, a sequence that is puzzling, but which clearly situates the noble eagle with bathetic specificity between two birds without similarly strong symbolic associations.

Peisthetairos takes an aggressive role in the conversation with the Oracle-Seller as soon as the latter's true intentions begin to appear. Unlike Trygaios, his primary tactic is not interruption, and he does not immediately shift to dactylic hexameter to counter the effects of his opponent's rhetoric. Instead, he repeatedly returns the meter to iambic trimeter with a series of questions challenging the authenticity of the various requests made by the Oracle-Seller (974, 976, 980).

These questions, which begin lines instead of ending them (in the style of Trygaios), have a number of effects. First, they, too, are bathetic in that they compel the Oracle-Seller to abandon his elevated dactylic hexameter proclamation in order to complete each trimeter before attempting to resume the putative oracle. As a result of the frequent interruptions, however, the dactylic hexameter lines are progressively less effective at establishing the authority of the Oracle-Seller. Second, the chiasmus and anaphora of Peisthetairos's questions (ἔνεστι καί [974] vs. καὶ . . . ἔνεστι [976, 980]) add additional rhetorical urgency to the uncertainty raised by the questions themselves. Finally, the questions are congruent metrically, each concluding after the seventh half-metron, although with slightly different metrical shapes.[113] Thus while the riposte of the Oracle-Seller, "Take the book," effectively rebuts Peisthetairos and completes the line the first time it appears (974), the metrical shape of Peisthetairos's successive questions demands that the Oracle-Seller's subsequent replies take the same form. The fact that he can find no other expression to improve on his first, therefore, leaves him nothing to do but repeat his challenge twice more, with diminishing rhetorical effectiveness.[114]

Peisthetairos's indirect resistance to the Oracle-Seller becomes suddenly direct when, in the first of two trimeter lines, he produces his own scroll and ascribes to it the greater authority of Apollo (over Bakis) (981–82; Dunbar 1995.549). As Dunbar also notes, the oracle he produces contains various epic features in addition to the fact that it is written in dactylic hexameter. Mute plus liquid is allowed to make position (ἄκλητος, 983 and there is correption of the final syllable of αἰετοῦ in 897 (Dunbar 1995.549).

Comic elements, nevertheless, are featured as well. ἀλαζών (983) is a favorite word of Aristophanes, and one in tune with the comic presumption that anyone who makes a claim for himself is a blowhard.

The threat of a beating is also a frequent motif (*pace Clouds* 541–42). In addition, Aristophanes parodies the speech of the Oracle-Seller in three ways. First, Peisthetairos's oracle specifies that the Oracle-Seller be beaten πλευρῶν τὸ μεταξύ, "between the ribs" (985). Thus it mocks the enigmatic reference to the land between Corinth and Sikyon and deflates the Oracle-Seller's nebulous image with a parodic one of painful specificity. Second, he appropriates the fatuous promise of the Oracle-Seller that he, Peisthetairos, will become an eagle in the sky to describe the determination with which the boaster must be pursued (987). Third, he parries the charge of the Oracle-Seller that he is talking nonsense (986) by repeating the Oracle-Seller's own line, "Take the book," thereby revitalizing the chresmologue's tired cliché as he continues to develop the "beating" theme.

It might seem that in repeating the failed rhetoric of the Oracle-Seller, Peisthetairos invites trouble for himself. The situation fails to develop in this way, however. Peisthetairos's repeated iambic trimeter intrusions are effective because the Oracle-Seller believes, or at least wants Peisthetairos to believe, that there is some special authority in dactylic hexameter oracles that is enhanced by their regularity and their elevated diction. When Peisthetairos, on the other hand, begins to use dactylic hexameter, it is as an unbeliever with a vested interest in debunking oracular authority. It has already been noted that his oracle is replete with comic motifs and common Aristophanic words. Thus the Oracle-Seller's attempt to undermine Peisthetairos's position by repeating his own tactics is ineffective and, in fact, plays right into Peisthetairos's hands, as can be seen in the final exchange between them. Lines 980 and 989 are the same except for the fact that the speakers are reversed, providing good examples of language identical on the lexical and syntactic levels but completely different at the level of the utterance.[115] Their effects are diametrically opposed as well. Whereas the final attempt of Peisthetairos to disrupt the Oracle-Seller is completely successful and allows him to continue with his own oracular production, the second attempt by the Oracle-Seller to stop Peisthetairos is without any positive result. Peisthetairos's second λαβὲ τὸν βιβλίον effectively seals his victory, and he follows it up in iambic trimeters (itself a sign that he considers the contest to be over) by preparing to make good on his implicit threats.

Throughout the passages examined in this chapter, a consistent strategy is visible. Epic-oracular discourse appears to have its strongest effects when it is allowed to develop at its famous leisurely pace (Auer-

bach 1953.3–23). For this reason, interruption is a particularly effective strategy for characters attempting to contest or resist the authority of dactylic hexameter poetry. These interruptions come in two forms. The first marks the assimilation of the oracular mode by the resisting character: interruptions that complete hexameter lines, thus capping what is said in accordance with the desires of the interrupter. The other style of interruption takes place at line end: the interrupter initiates a bathetic movement from hexameter to trimeter and forces the interlocutor to complete the line and become, as it were, a co-conspirator in his own defeat.

Moreover, the assimilation of the oracular mode by the resisting character has the effect of diluting the unique flavor of epic language and thus turning it into another type of everyday speech to be evaluated along similar lines. The assumption made by characters who attempt to wield oracular authority on their own is that it is a privileged form of discourse not open to all. By contesting that proprietary notion, however, resisters of epic-oracular authority turn hexameter poetry into a lingua franca that increases its base while reducing its rhetorical effectiveness.

Finally, resisters of the specifically Homeric forms of epic authority effectively adapt Homer to their own particular needs. Trygaios in *Peace* first uses Homer's preference for peace to undermine Hierocles' oracles concerning the need to keep the war going, then rejects Homeric authority on the basis of its inappropriate content when the continuing belligerence of Lamachos's son threatens to add an ominous note to his wedding festivities. In all of these examples, the substantive issues of comedy are fought for on the level of language. In such struggles, traditionally privileged discourses like dactylic hexameter poetry in its various forms are subjected to a scrutiny vis-à-vis other genres that their monolithic structures do not normally encounter. When this occurs, hexameter poetry is relativized by its contact with polymetric genres, and resourceful characters find ways to exploit this weakness to their own benefit.

5 The Return of Telephus

Acharnians, *Thesmophoriazusae*, and the Dialogic Background

> Nothing "recurs"; the same word over again might accumulate, reinforce, perhaps parody what came before it, but it cannot be the same word if it is in a different place. Repetitiveness is not repetitiousness.—Caryl Emerson

Bakhtin characterizes the "epic" mentality, which tragedy embodies, as favoring the construction of literary works that represent themselves as fully independent cultural products neither requiring supplementation to bolster their authority nor needing to explain themselves or respond to other genres. Aristophanic comedy, on the other hand, constructs itself largely in opposition to its surroundings (Cleon, war, Athenian litigiousness, bad comedy, Euripides), and consistently presents itself as a hybrid. This trait is not merely the result of the intense flowering of the high literary consciousness of the late fifth century, it is a continuing development of comedy's traditional features. Indeed, comedy's double heritage of iambic *psogos*, "abuse," and mythological burlesque (shown in the plays attributed to Epicharmus,[1] in Athenian comedies featuring Odysseus by Cratinus and Theopompus, as well as in the continued popularity of the comic Heracles[2]) suggests a form that is actively conscious of its position in literary history. Previous chapters have attempted to describe the complex interactions that result from this engagement with the extradramatic world: Dikaiopolis' reflections on his own spectatorship at various artistic performances; *Clouds*' dependence on Socrates, with the influence of tragedy in the background; *Wasps*' reprise of the reception of *Clouds*; and the treatment of epic-oracular speech as it appears in *Lysistrata*, *Knights*, *Peace*,

and *Birds*. One theme that links these readings is comedy's aggressive engagement with other competitive genres and its determination to displace them from their positions of prominence.

I would like to turn now to several passages in *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae*[3] where Aristophanic comedy makes explicit use of tragedy, use that goes far beyond the assumption of a tragic tone or allusions to specific plays. Tragedy is itself brought on stage and, thus dialogized, becomes the object of an intense metatheatrical critique. Indeed, the degree to which tragedy and comedy interpenetrate in these plays is so great that space does not permit a comprehensive examination of the subject.[4] I shall concentrate instead on the representation of Euripides' *Telephus*, to which I have already made reference in Chapter 1 (see also Handley and Rea 1957 and Preiser 2000). *Telephus* is a thread that links the plays and is also important as an icon for Aristophanes' relationship with Euripidean tragedy in general. In *Acharnians*, Dikaiopolis assumes the role of Telephus, whose costume and props he borrows from the workshop of Euripides. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, the Relative reprises the role of Telephus, albeit less successfully than Dikaiopolis, when he attempts to defend Euripidean tragedy before the *ecclesia* of women celebrating the festival of Demeter and Persephone.[5]

This presence of Euripides' *Telephus* in the plays of Aristophanes over a twenty-year period testifies to various continuities in the work of Aristophanes: his continuing juxtaposition of comedy, tragedy, and alternative models of dramatic mimesis; his analysis of Euripides' polemical relationship with the traditions of tragic representation; as well as his fascination with Euripides as a rival innovator, a relationship noted also by Cratinus with his neologism εὐριπιδαριστοφανίζειν, "Euripid-Aristophanize."[6]

Yet despite this evident continuity, the appearances of *Telephus* express a difference as well. They are, of course, adapted to their particular dramatic contexts. For example, in *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae*, the Telephus motif is introduced in the service of comic ends. In *Acharnians*, Telephus's appearance furthers Dikaiopolis' scheme to establish a separate peace with the Spartans, while in *Thesmophoriazusae*, he is the accomplice of the Relative. In contrast, the brief mentions of *Telephus* in *Clouds* (891, 921–24; see Chapter 2) and *Frogs* (955, 960–64) do not significantly advance the action but are iconic expressions of tragedy's compromised dignity as a result of the influence of Euripides.

Beyond anomalies that result from the specific dramatic conditions of the individual plays, however, there are additional differences that

result from the position of each representation in literary history. *Acharnians* engages only with Euripides' play of 438. Telephus's second major appearance in *Thesmophoriazusae*, however, must be seen not only in terms of Euripides' "original" play (now some twenty-seven years in the past) *but also* in terms of the intervening *Acharnians* parody.[7] Thus *Thesmophoriazusae* is doubly dialogized by the presence of the complex texts that form its background.[8]

In attempting to read Aristophanes' Telephus, therefore, we encounter two different registers of meaning, one synchronic and testifying to continuity and sustained interest in the Mysian king, the other diachronic and drawing our attention to the way in which the meaning of the Telephus story is created as much by the accretions that accompany its successive appearances in Aristophanes as by the "original" treatment by Euripides that putatively functions as the primary referent.[9] For this reason, I shall consider the plays in chronological order, paying attention to both synchronic and diachronic aspects of the motif. What will emerge, I hope, is a reading of *Telephus* that exhibits a strong centripetal movement on a certain level, testifying to the continuity of Aristophanes' fascination with the play, while actively exploiting *Telephus*'s centrifugal effects on others. Euripides, for Aristophanes, turns out to be an author who is "good to think with," and his usefulness is only limited by the scope of Aristophanes' interests and by the changes at work in the form of Old Comedy.

In reading *Acharnians*, our attention is inevitably drawn to Euripides' *Telephus* of 438, as it clearly forms the major subtext for *Acharnians*. This is obvious not only from the frequent citations of the play in the scholia to *Acharnians* but also from the way in which Aristophanes' play explicitly invokes the mechanisms of Euripidean dramaturgy, from Euripides' putative theory of composition, expounded by the servant and then by Euripides himself, to the machinery that delivers him to the stage and later back inside his house.

Euripides' play appears to have begun *in medias res*. The Greek army, attempting to sail to Troy, had landed by mistake in Mysia, ruled by Telephus, a displaced Greek and the son of Auge by Heracles.[10] A battle (apparently inconclusive) ensued in which Telephus was wounded by the spear of Achilles. The Greeks, having perhaps been scattered on the return voyage, eventually reassembled in Argos. Telephus, meanwhile, failing to recover from his injury, learned from an oracle that the wound could only be healed by the one who caused it. He therefore resolves to find Achilles and seek a cure for his affliction. It seems likely

that Euripides' play opened at this point, with Telephus in Argos appearing onstage dressed as a beggar. Many uncertainties remain regarding the scenes that follow, but the general series of events is fairly certain.[11] Telephus is able to enter the palace and, at some point, meet Clytemnestra and win her sympathy. Still disguised as a beggar, he intercedes in a debate among the Greeks regarding whether or not to re-embark for Troy, after which his true identity is discovered. Seizing the infant Orestes as a hostage, presumably with the collusion of Clytemnestra, he compels the Greeks to listen to his defense, which convinces half the chorus to side with him. Their impasse is eventually resolved by the discovery that Telephus is, in fact, a Greek and willing to guide the army to the kingdom of Priam (his father-in-law!). Telephus is cured by the rust on the spearhead of Achilles, thus fulfilling the letter of the prophecy, and the Greeks prepare to depart again for Troy.

Aristophanes' first major engagement with Euripides' version of the story occurs in *Acharnians* (425 B.C.E.), where Dikaiopolis reprises much of Euripides' play (438 B.C.E.) by impersonating the lame king (lines 317–625).[12] He quotes verbatim from the prologue (in which Telephus explained his costume to the audience) to justify his decision to impersonate Euripides' ragged king (440–41):[13]

> δεῖ γὰρ με δόξαι πτωχὸν εἶναι τήμερον,
> εἶναι μὲν ὅσπερ εἰμί, φαίνεσθαι δὲ μή·
>
> For I must seem to be a beggar today,
> To be who I am, but not to seem so.

Another attempt to weave Euripides' play into *Acharnians* occurs in the house of Euripides himself. After several attempts to guess the character whose costume Dikaiopolis seeks, Euripides cries out (430): οἶδ' ἄνδρα, Μυσὸν Τήλεφον, "I know the man, Mysian Telephus," echoing the scene in which Telephus's identity became known to the Greeks (= 704 N^2).[14] Similarly, Dikaiopolis thanks Euripides, saying obliquely: "May you do well, and as for Telephus—what I have in mind" (446 = 707 N^2).[15]

Other quotations are more carefully concealed. As early as *Acharnians* 8, Dikaiopolis quotes a line apparently delivered by Achilles (Telephus's main antagonist in Euripides' play): ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι, "It is good for Greece" (720 N^2). Finally, an implicit quotation from Euripides also offers the opportunity for sustained physical humor in the play. Dikaiopolis proposes to defend his decision to seek a separate peace

with Sparta with his head already on a chopping block (317–18), an offer he renews later in the scene (355–56) and eventually makes good on (366–84; see Jouan 1989.20). His unusual behavior is pointed directly at Euripides' play, where Telephus defiantly expressed his determination to speak in his own defense before his Greek enemies (706 N²):[16]

> Ἀγάμεμνον, οὐδ' εἰ πέλεκυν ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων
> μέλλοι τις εἰς τράχηλον ἐμβαλεῖν ἐμόν,
> σιγήσομαι δίκαιά γ' ἀντειπεῖν ἔχων.
>
> Agamemnon, if someone holding an axe in his hands
> Should be about to strike my neck,
> Not even then will I be silent but continue to speak justly in reply.

The above examples show clearly the degree to which Aristophanes' *Acharnians* is permeated with direct and indirect quotations from Euripides' *Telephus*, in addition to the visual aspects of the play evoked first when Dikaiopolis describes the costume of Telephus to Euripides in excruciating detail (415–69).[17] This visual aspect is further emphasized when Dikaiopolis wears this same costume to deliver his speech in Telephean fashion to the Acharnian chorus and later to Lamachos—who are made to play the Achaean leaders and, presumably, Achilles, respectively (497–625).[18]

Euripides' *Telephus* is clearly a major influence on the comic depiction of Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians*. However, it is not necessarily the only literary work that Aristophanes exploits. I would like to continue by discussing the Telephus story as it was current in the fifth century. Much of the material for such a discussion has been gathered by Timothy Gantz, who shows that far from being an obscure part of the mythological tradition, as it seems to modern readers, Euripides' *Telephus* was produced before an audience that would have been quite familiar with the legend, having encountered it in the *Cypria* as well as in recent tragedies by Aeschylus and Sophocles (Gantz 1993.578–79). This general familiarity suggests, in turn, that these works (especially the tragedies) may be a part of the intertextual mix in *Acharnians*, perhaps even in *Thesmophoriazusae*.

In view of the paucity of evidence for these plays, this possibility is only an attractive speculation. Later, however, I will argue that Aristophanes' plays, especially *Thesmophoriazusae*, are shot through with intertextual references that go beyond what appears to twenty-first-century readers to be an exclusive focus on Euripides' *Telephus*. It will be suf-

ficient for my purposes here if the existence of multiple "Telephuses" reminds us of the wider-ranging literary contexts of the myth that were available to fifth-century audiences. What follows, then, is an attempt to situate the play in the context of fifth-century literature.

The story of Telephus was known in the Archaic period and seems to have enjoyed a considerable vogue in the fifth century. It probably appeared as early as the *Cypria* (Severyns 1928.29–95 and Gantz 1993.578–80). The scholiast on *Iliad* 1.59 records a version in which Telephus was wounded by Achilles after he became tangled in some vines, the latter mishap having been brought about by Dionysus, whom he had angered.[19] In regard to the conflict between Achilles and Telephus, Pindar refers to Mysia as a land "of many vines" (*Isthmian* 8.49–50).

These references to Telephus and grapevines seem to connect to *Acharnians* on several levels. It has been noted by various writers that, by the end of the play, it is Lamachos, and not Dikaiopolis, whose role is suggestive of Telephus (van Leeuwen 1901 and Foley 1988.39). A. M. Bowie goes further and persuasively connects the version of the story from the Iliadic scholia with the particular manner in which Lamachos is struck down at the end of *Acharnians* (1993.30). As the play comes to an end, the respective fortunes of Dikaiopolis and Lamachos are contrasted: Dikaiopolis is preparing for a feast, and Lamachos is called up for active duty to defend a border fortress (1079–1142). Dikaiopolis later returns drunk, having been victorious in a drinking contest. The fate of Lamachos, by contrast, is announced first by his servant, who delivers the story in the manner of a tragic messenger. According to the servant, Lamachos was wounded by a vine-prop (1188). Lamachos enters a little later, offering his own version of events and claiming to have been wounded by an enemy spear (1194, 1226). Bowie notes the metaphorical appropriateness of both remarks (1993.30):

> Lamachus too is the victim, not of a vine, but of a vine-prop, and also of an enemy's spear. There is an echo too of Dionysus' displeasure: in *Acharnians* the vines suffer at the hands of war and warriors . . ., so they may, in wounding Lamachus, who stands in the play for war, be said to have had their revenge on the warmongers.

Bowie's analysis of "the vine's revenge" appears in the context of his discussion of how the characters of both Dikaiopolis and Telephus are fragmented and unstable; they do not provide a coherent basis for interpreting *Acharnians*. This conclusion is consistent with my own reading of the prologue in Chapter 1. What concerns me here is primarily

mythographic, that is, the degree to which the end of *Acharnians* appears to evoke the version of the Telephus story found in the *Iliad* scholia, specifically the intervention of Dionysus in the form of a vine. No reference to this motif is present in the fragments of Euripides' *Telephus*, and, given the play's focus on Achilles as the primary antagonist of Telephus, there is no reason to think that Euripides included it at all.[20] Thus it begins to appear that *Acharnians* is no simple recasting of Euripides' *Telephus* but a polyglot production that borrows promiscuously from the oral-literary tradition as it stood in the late fifth century.

Having reason to believe that non-Euripidean aspects of the Telephus story as derived from the *Cypria* and alluded to in Pindar play a significant role in *Acharnians*, we may return to Athenian tragedy, for which the evidence is suggestive, if not detailed. Aeschylus wrote plays called *Mysoi* and *Telephus*, which were probably part of a connected trilogy.[21] There is no evidence for a date of production.[22] Of the events dramatized in these plays, little is known beyond the claim of the scholiast on *Acharnians* 332 that Aeschylus depicted Telephus as seizing the infant Orestes and holding him as a hostage. The statement of the scholiast has been doubted, but without good reason.[23] It is more reasonable to accept the common sense proposition that Euripides wrote his play in full knowledge of Aeschylus's trilogy and that his hostage scene therefore would need to be seen in the light of the earlier one in order to be understood fully.[24]

A similar relationship vis-à-vis Euripides' *Telephus* appears to exist for Sophocles' treatment of the story. Two Sophoclean titles are preserved: *Mysoi* and *Syllogos Achaion*, the latter of which may have covered part of the same story as Euripides' *Telephus*.[25] Thus on the basis of the probable anteriority of Sophocles, it would be surprising if Euripides' *Telephus* had no important resonances with Sophocles' version.[26] Unfortunately, the remains of the two Sophoclean plays are very scanty, limited to twenty-eight verses and a dozen glosses; it is impossible, therefore, to make a strong argument about the relationship between them and Euripides' own highly fragmentary play. Nevertheless, that there was a significant congruence of subject matter in the treatments of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides makes the existence of textual interaction an attractive speculation, and it is certainly possible that the plays by Aeschylus and Sophocles provide important secondary resonances for Aristophanes' *Acharnians*. In any event, it seems clear that a play about Telephus written in 425 had a lot more than Euripides to draw on.[27]

By recontextualizing the Aristophanic representation of *Telephus*

within a more complex literary tradition, we emphasize the degree to which Aristophanes' engagement with the story has no exclusive source, despite our inability to document fully the contributing threads. Such a composite background allows us to appreciate better the fluctuating associations of *Telephus* that are perceptible in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* and cautions us against limiting the play's intertextual component by concentrating *exclusively* on Euripides' *Telephus*. With these issues in mind, let us now return to Euripides in *Acharnians* in hopes of reassessing his importance within a more completely dialogic background.

As stated above, *Acharnians*' engagement with Euripides' *Telephus* begins early in the prologue of Dikaiopolis when the old farmer quotes, apparently with approbation (but also without comment) the words of Achilles: ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι (8).[28] The effect of the line's placement is incongruous, of course, as has been discussed in Chapter 1. Dikaiopolis the farmer shows ingenuity and cunning, but he is no Achilles. The effect of this weak impersonation cuts two ways: the ludicrous pretensions of Dikaiopolis in mimicking the rhetoric of a tragic hero are dramatized, while the artificiality of Achilles' diction due to the relative absence of colloquial language (imperceptible on the tragic stage) becomes comically visible in the mouth of the comic character.

Further, Dikaiopolis' impersonation of a tragic figure, even at this early stage of the play, hints at the complex impersonations that will follow and emphasizes their generic ramifications. The incongruity is particularly emphasized if, as has been suggested by others, the event that Dikaiopolis sententiously approves (Cleon's vomiting) was a scene from a more or less recent comedy (see Chapter 1). Thus the first appearance of Euripides' *Telephus* in *Acharnians* serves several purposes. It contributes to the overall mockery of tragedy, undermines the seriousness of Dikaiopolis' lament, and introduces a key thematic element in the play: the attempt to influence the outcome of the dramatic action metatheatrically, through the impersonation of tragic characters.[29]

With this view of the significance of line 8 in mind, let us look briefly at the prologue for what it does *not* contain. Despite Dikaiopolis' explicit concern with modern art in the opening lines of the play (τραγῳδικόν, 9), his explicit evocation of Aeschylus as the spirit presiding over the "good old days" of tragic performance, and the evident importance of Euripidean tragedy to the thematic concerns of *Acharnians*, Euripides is strikingly absent from Dikaiopolis' indictment of the contemporary scene.[30]

Various explanations are possible that are not necessarily mutually

exclusive. It could simply be the case that Aristophanes doesn't mention Euripides to avoid focusing obsessively on him early in the play, thereby diluting the force of the *Telephus* parody that appears so prominently later. Nevertheless, one would be hard pressed to use comic moderation as the most appropriate standard for judging Aristophanic comedy, the words of the *Clouds* chorus (549–50) to that effect notwithstanding.[31] Nor does moderation appear to have been a particular motivating force in *Thesmophoriazusae*, with its buffet of Euripidean tragedy consisting of extended parodies of his *Helen*, *Palamedes*, and *Andromeda* (with Euripides himself in the leading role) to go with a freestanding reprise of *Telephus*. But perhaps the younger Aristophanes was more moderate, and indeed, the acknowledged quotation from line 8, shows that Euripides is not far from the scene, even if he is not mentioned by name like Theognis, Deixitheus, and Chairis.[32]

In addition to this possibility, it is worth pointing out a practical matter: in spite of the aggressive anti-Euripidean aspects of *Acharnians*, and the degree to which Aeschylus is the representative of the good old days recalled by both Dikaiopolis and the Acharnian chorus, it is Euripides who is indispensable if Dikaiopolis' intentions are to be fulfilled. Dikaiopolis is thus compelled to choose against his pleasure, like Dionysus in *Frogs*, who prefers Euripides, but eventually judges Aeschylus to be most useful. So Dikaiopolis, whose uncritical attraction to Aeschylus has already been discussed, prefers Aeschylus but goes to Euripides for help (see Chapter 3). Comic plots are not reducible to statements of aesthetic preference, of course, and Dikaiopolis' need for Euripides does not simply imply that Aristophanes approves of him. Nevertheless, the acknowledged need for Euripidean rhetoric in the play[33]—it is just these aspects of Telephus that are emphasized[34] in addition to his squalid appearance—does suggest quite clearly that even if it could be established that Aristophanes disapproved of Euripidean modernism, his utility as a source of plot-driving rhetoric would still render him an ambivalent figure for Aristophanes, whose own behavior, on this reading, inverts the aesthetic paradigm offered by *Frogs*. Unlike Dionysus, who begins the play longing for Euripides, but eventually chooses to bring Aeschylus back out of Hades, so Aristophanes appears to claim that he prefers Aeschylus—but it is Euripides he cannot live without.

The absence of Euripides from Dikaiopolis' opening tableau should also be seen in the light of the acknowledged quality of his work. Despite the relatively small number of victories attributed to the tragedian, Aristophanes' criticism of tragic style does not include Euripides. Kaimio

and Nykopp (1997) show that the evaluation of major tragedians like Euripides and Agathon in Aristophanes (even when they are otherwise ridiculed) is of a very different sort than that reserved for "bad poets" like Theognis and Xenocles, whose style can be dismissed with a single word. The appearances of Euripides, on the other hand, are more detailed and focus not on the weakness of his writing but the suspicious fluency that allows it to be aligned with the practitioners of sophistic rhetoric, even in brief mentions like the neologism κομψευριπικῶς, "in an elevated Euripidean way" (*Knights* 18), used by one of the slaves as he searches for the right word.[35]

To these aspects of Euripidean style, we might add a self-conscious emphasis on critical thinking, a fact that lies behind the notorious *deinotes*, "sharpness," that characterizes Telephus's speaking ability, but which is most explicitly claimed for Euripides by his character in *Frogs* (957–58):

> νοεῖν ὁρᾶν ξυνιέναι στρέφειν ἐρᾶν τεχνάζειν,
> κάχ' ὑποτοπεῖσθαι, περινοεῖν ἅπαντα.
>
> [I taught them] to know, to see, to understand, to twist, to be in love, to contrive,
> To anticipate evil, to investigate thoroughly everything.

It is these features of Euripides that are used to develop the series of parallels between Aristophanes' Euripides and Aristophanic comedy that are so striking and that no doubt prompted Cratinus to coin "Euripid-Aristophanize" in order to link Aristophanes with the same sort of over-subtle language that Aristophanes' characters attribute to Euripides alone. A conjunction of Euripides and Aristophanes is hardly spurious, then, and much of Euripides' self-description finds parallels in Aristophanic comedy's own self-awareness. As we have seen, Aristophanic comedy also prides itself on its sophisticated use of language and, particularly, its novelty (see Chapters 2 and 3). It also bases the case for its didactic function (*Acharnians* 633–40) on its ability to sensitize the Athenian audience to the subtleties of language so as not "to be deceived too much by foreign speeches" (*Acharnians* 634).[36] The chorus' examples are the promiscuous use of ἰοστέφανοι, "violet-crowned," and λιπαραί, "bright," both apparently borrowed from Pindar (*Isthmian* 2.2, also frag. 64 Bowra) and reduced to rhetorical clichés. Before Aristophanes' intervention, the Acharnian chorus says, such expressions caused the Athenians to sit up on their *pugidia* ("bottoms") and give the speakers whatever they asked for. Thanks to his teaching, however, the Athenians are

no longer so easy to fool.[37] In this way, Aristophanic comedy also positions itself as the teacher of the Athenians, and thus validates Euripides' innovative practices, despite its superficial criticisms of them.[38]

The similarities that unite Aristophanic comedy and Euripidean tragedy show how the inclusion of Euripides in Dikaiopolis' aesthetic prologue would present problems for Aristophanes. For all his preciousness of thought,[39] Euripides is not even a junior member of what Kaimo and Nykopp (1997) refer to as the "Bad Poets' Society," and Aristophanes maintains an ambivalent relationship with the tragedian while using the rhetorical *panourgia* ("shamelessness") of his characters to drive comic plots.[40] In this way, the prologue of *Acharnians* stands as a self-contained unit. The Telephean subtext is clearly introduced for those with sufficient familiarity with Euripidean tragedy to appreciate the reference, but Euripides himself is missing from the criticism of the contemporary scene, where his presence would only complicate unnecessarily the zero-sum game that deprecates bad tragedy by contrasting it with the image of Dikaiopolis eagerly waiting for Aeschylus. At the same time, the simultaneous presence/absence of Euripides at the beginning of *Acharnians* accurately figures his ambivalent function in comedy.

The explicit engagement of *Acharnians* with Euripides' *Telephus*, in contrast to the covert quotation of Achilles' speech at line 8, is gradual, progressing as much through summary and spectacle as by direct appeal to the Euripidean text. After staging the Rural Dionysia on behalf of his household (237–79), Dikaiopolis is confronted by the chorus of Acharnian farmers who are furious at him for having made peace with the Spartans. The rhetorical situation is manifestly difficult for him, and the need to speak before a group so implacably hostile appears to suggest the case of Telephus from the beginning. The chorus is not disposed to allow Dikaiopolis to speak at all, desiring to punish him immediately. He responds with a proposition that flatters their vanity and appears to acknowledge in advance the fact that any attempt to convert them will be fruitless (317–18):

> κἄν γε μὴ λέγω δίκαια μηδὲ τῷ πλήθει δοκῶ,
> ὑπὲρ ἐπιξήνου ϑελήσω τὴν κεφαλὴν ἔχων λέγειν.
>
> And if I don't speak justly and don't seem so to the crowd,
> I will be willing to speak with my head on a butcher block.

According to the scholiast, Aristophanes is reprising a metaphor from Euripides' *Telephus* (706 N^2):

᾿Αγάμεμνον, οὐδ᾽ εἰ πέλεκυν ἐν χεροῖν ἔχων
μέλλοι τις εἰς τράχηλον ἐμβαλεῖν ἐμόν,
σιγήσομαι δίκαιά γ᾽ ἀντειπεῖν ἔχων.

Agamemnon, if someone holding an axe in his hands
Should be about to strike my neck,
Not even then will I be silent but continue to speak justly in reply.

The image of speaking with one's head on a chopping block is vivid, dramatic, and absurd. It would not seem out of place in Aristophanes if we knew nothing more about it. The quotation from *Telephus*, on the other hand, is only implied, and despite the echoes, it seems likely that a good number of the spectators would not have recognized the relationship of the two plays with this first mention. Dikaiopolis' offer would have sounded either like a striking new locution or the literalization of a metaphor already in use.[41] Only by stages would the audience have come to recognize the presence of Euripides' play.

For those who recognize the scene as a travesty of *Telephus*, however, a different series of associations arises. The two passages are linked in two ways. The first is literary; Dikaiopolis' words λέγω δίκαια, "I speak just things," clearly alludes to δίκαιά . . . ἀντειπεῖν, "speak justly in reply," spoken by Telephus. Here the just cause of Dikaiopolis finds ready expression in the rhetoric of Telephus's own defense. This evocation of Euripides is positive, in that his style can be used effectively in comedy when a rhetorical tour de force is called for. In this way, then, the parallels between the situations of Dikaiopolis and that of Euripides' Telephus portray Euripidean rhetoric as a valuable addition to the resources of the comic character.

The second link between the two passages undermines and ironizes this positive, supplementary relationship. It is made primarily by the visual image of beheading, and the image of a Telephus prone and helpless to resist a deadly attack is central to the force of his statement. Further, his emphases, "axe," "hands," "neck," and "strike," suggest an ungrammatical but nonetheless inexorable progression of actions, ending with the death of Telephus, all of which underscore both the gravity of the rhetorical situation and, indirectly, Telephus's attachment to, and dire need for, justice.

Dikaiopolis' imitation works quite differently. Its overall effect is to literalize, and so trivialize, the image used by Telephus in Euripides' play. Beyond that, however, the *Telephus* text is reconstructed in comic terms that quite reverse the rhetorical implications of the original. Most im-

portant in this respect is the new scene's visual component, epitomized by the changes Dikaiopolis makes in his paraphrase of the *Telephus* passage. He ignores his model's reference to the πέλεκυς, the potential instrument of his destruction, and replaces it with the ἐπίξηνον, "butcher block." This substitution radically alters the associations. Telephus's original statement to Agamemnon, with its emphasis on the helpless victim, is derived from the scenes of pity in Homer, when the choice between mercy and vengeance rests entirely in the hands of the victorious hero (e.g., *Iliad* 20.463–71). In Aristophanes, the tone of the speech is lowered appreciably, as the weapons of the Homeric hero are replaced by the tools of the laborer transacting his prosaic business. Furthermore, Dikaiopolis' offer, rejected by the chorus, then reinstated after the hostage scene, shifts the focus of the scene from the intense moment when questions of life and death depend on the discretion of the victor to a comic denial of death and a speech delivered in a thoroughly ridiculous posture.[42]

Practically, however, the convoluted offer made by Dikaiopolis entails no consequences whatsoever if he should fail to persuade the chorus, even in the unlikely event that one of the old men thought to bring an axe (see Olson 2002.160). The spectacle thus evoked is less grim than it initially appears. In fact, it is ludicrous in the extreme, and exemplifies the tactic abundantly illustrated in *Acharnians* of exciting laughter by doing an ordinary thing in an extraordinary way. Such a restaging of Euripides' play cannot help but erode its dignity and put it into an ironic relationship both with its ("original") self and with its parodic double. By revising the *Telephus* passage in such a way as to accentuate the ludicrous visual impact of Dikaiopolis giving a defense speech fully bent over, audience members who see the scene as a revision of Euripides' play are forced to see that play again, this time sensitized to the latent physical comedy of what would have been a serious Euripidean scene.

Thus *Acharnians*' second engagement with *Telephus* is expressed ambivalently. On the one hand, the isomorphism of Telephus's position with that of Dikaiopolis suggests an alliance between the two plays that reflects positively upon Euripides (and, perhaps, encourages comedy's sense of self-importance). On the other, Dikaiopolis' restaging of Euripidean drama forces the audience to imagine the staging of Euripidean tragedy as though its components had value only on the metaphorical level, a process that is particularly efficacious for Dikaiopolis' manipulation of the chorus but, more importantly, has the effect of turning Euripides' dramatic tension into a travesty, and an example, of physical comedy.[43]

Aristophanes' use of Euripides' *Telephus* in the speech that follows his offer to speak ὑπ' ἐπίξηνον can be understood as continuing the same strategy of presentation. Lines 497–99 are explicit in this regard, and I will limit my analysis to them, along with the conversation of Dikaiopolis and Lamachos at 578–95 that refers back to them several times. The latter passage also continues to emphasize the motif of raggedness, a topic key to the characterization of Euripides as a creator of beggars and cripples (*Acharnians* 411–13, *Frogs* 842). This emphasis on the physical qualities of Euripides' characters might be described as the visual component of Euripidean realism as it is mocked in Aristophanes (as opposed to the idealization of form and preference for heroic subject matter found, so the story goes, in Euripides' predecessors).[44] In addition, this focus on the corporeal features of Euripidean tragedy also serves to contrast the first part of this chapter with the second, as *Thesmophoriazusae* differs from *Acharnians* in its complete lack of interest in the visual aspects of Telephus and its emphasis on the challenge of Euripidean tragedy as a whole.

Having returned from the house of Euripides disguised as Telephus, Dikaiopolis addresses the chorus in the following way (497–99):

> μὴ μοι φθονήσητ', ἄνδρες οἱ θεώμενοι,
> εἰ πτωχὸς ὢν ἔπειτ' ἐν Ἀθηναίους λέγειν
> μέλλω περὶ τῆς πόλεως, τρυγῳδίαν ποιῶν.
>
> Do not be angry, spectators,
> If although a beggar in a comedy,
> I intend to speak to the Athenians about the city while performing a trygoidia.

These lines respond to Euripides' *Telephus* 703 N[2]:

> μὴ μοι φθονήσητ', ἄνδρες Ἑλλήνων ἄκροι,
> εἰ πτωχὸς ὢν τέτληκ' ἐν ἐσθλοῖσιν λέγειν.
>
> Do not be angry, leaders of the Greeks,
> If, although a beggar, I dare to speak in the presence of noble men.

The two passages are not identical, but the parallels between them are clear. The first four words of each are the same, and both are followed by an address in the vocative. In addition, the first three words of *Acharnians* 498 and the second line of the Euripides passage are identical. Furthermore, both lines conclude with λέγειν. Finally, both passages are part of recognizably similar rhetorical situations: the disguised beggar Telephus

is attempting to disarm the aristocratic bias of the Achaian leaders and the disguised beggar Dikaiopolis is attempting to disarm the hostility of the Acharnian chorus, who also represent the Athenian audience. To this extent, then, we can say that, from the perspective of Aristophanes, Euripides' character offers a useful rhetorical model for successful comic action, one that is exploited to advance the cause of Dikaiopolis.

On the other hand, discrepancies between the two passages are also significant and, from the perspective of Aristophanic comedy, point to an ambivalent relationship with Euripidean tragedy. Most obviously, the Ἑλλήνων ἄκροι ("leaders of the Greeks") of *Telephus* become, out of necessity, the spectators of the play (οἱ θεώμενοι). In the same vein, ἐν Ἀθηναίους ("before the Athenians") replaces the ἐν ἐσθλοῖσιν ("before noble men") of *Telephus*. Both substitutions result in a diminution of tone, as adjectives with positive connotations (ἄκροι, ἐσθλοῖσιν) give way to prosaic substantives (θεώμενοι, Ἀθηναίοις) denoting only civic function and appearing without further positive qualification. (They may be Athenians, but are they still ἐσθλοί?).

These small changes, however, are directed only at the part of the audience familiar with Euripides' play, whereas the presence of tragic idiom (e.g., the absence of resolution in the first line of Aristophanes' version [496]) is detectable by anyone with a general familiarity with the way a tragic line sounds. The language specific to *Telephus*, however, is only perceivable by the subset of the audience familiar with the specific features of individual plays. To such an audience, the changes Aristophanes makes, although explicable on dramatic grounds, subtly affect the tone of the passage. Euripides is clearly a major victim of these alterations, forced to allow his tragic rhetoric to be redeployed ridiculously by Aristophanic comedy, as has been discussed in Chapter 1.

In addition, on the level of plot, the chorus is subtly undermined, as the heroic resonance of the Euripidean adjectives allotted to Telephus' audience (ἄκρος, ἐσθλός) is implicitly rejected in Dikaiopolis' description in favor of a more prosaic tone. By this same logic, the Athenian spectators are also targeted. In altering the *Telephus* passage, Dikaiopolis addresses ambivalently the Acharnian chorus, his primary "Athenian audience," as well as the *theomenoi* seated in the theater, his secondary "Athenian audience."[45] In this way, the diminution of tone that affects the status of the old men applies to the larger group as well.

Thus Aristophanes' use of *Telephus* in this passage of *Acharnians* has a double function: to facilitate the rhetorical project of Dikaiopolis, where its relationship with the source text is essentially positive, and as

a means of drawing attention to the inadequacies of various constituencies, where Dikaiopolis' rhetoric consciously rejects the heroic epithets of the Euripidean model and substitutes for them prosaic versions more appropriate for the more modest virtues of Acharnian chorus and Athenian spectators. Finally, the use of *Telephus* is part of Aristophanes' ongoing attempt to use the mentality of double-voiced carnival laughter to undermine the prestige of tragedy and, concurrently, to enhance the status of comedy, which, Dikaiopolis assures us, is also familiar with loftier concerns (500).

The second difference between the Euripidean model and its Aristophanic imitation is the extra line accorded to the request for indulgence in Dikaiopolis' version (499). This line is effective in several ways. First, it facilitates the shift in Dikaiopolis' presentation from the perspective of Telephus the Mysian to that of Dikaiopolis/Aristophanes the Athenian. Second, it makes explicit, and indeed heightens, the incongruous blend of comedy and tragedy that characterizes Dikaiopolis' quotation from Euripides. Third, it causes revisions in 498, partly in order to accommodate the additional line grammatically and partly, it seems, to lower the tone of the tragic quotation with prosaic substitutions.

In addition to completing the altered *Telephus* quotation that I have been discussing, line 499 is the fulcrum where the scene shifts from tragic plots to contemporary politics. Dikaiopolis, who suddenly merges into a dramatic double of Aristophanes the poet, justifies "his" actions in advance, taking care to distinguish the present situation from that of the previous year's dramatic festival, after which Cleon had slandered "him" (502–08). He signals his determination to address contemporary issues in 499 with his promise to speak περὶ τῆς πόλεως, "about the city."

Yet the turn away from the *Telephus* parody is at best a feint. The same line also contains the phrase τρυγῳδίαν ποιῶν, "while performing *trygoidia*," a claim that evokes simultaneously both the tragic and comic contexts of Dikaiopolis' speech.[46] The first part of τρυγῳδία may derive from τρύξ, "wine-lees," pointing to the ritual character of Greek comedy and, indirectly, to the anarchic spirit associated with the drinking of wine.[47] The second part of the word is related to ᾠδή, "song," with the result that the "song of the wine-lees" becomes a synonym for comedy itself.[48] The connection with tragedy (τραγῳδία) is equally close, for the two words are almost identical but for the initial vowel quality. Further, τρυγῳδία is not found outside of Aristophanes and appears to have been coined for its resonance with τραγῳδία.[49] Thus although Dikaiopolis

affects to shift the focus of his efforts to the field of contemporary politics, his use of τρυγῳδία points the spectators right back in the direction of the literary *pas de deux* of comedy and tragedy (see Reckford 1987.443–51).

The substitutions that Aristophanes makes in adding the line to his quotation from *Telephus* produce an interesting effect that contributes directly to the alternation between high and low style. Most significant is the substitution for Euripides' τέτληκ', "I dared." τλῆναι is a verb from high poetry found frequently in epic.[50] It occurs nowhere in comedy except where tragedy or its tone are parodied.[51] Therefore, substituting for it almost necessarily involves a lowering of the tone. Here this is accomplished in two ways. First, the word that occupies the metrical position of τέτληκ' in Dikaiopolis' line is the colorless adverb ἔπειτ', "then." Second, the finite verb that occupies the grammatical position of τέτληκ' is μέλλω, "I intend." Both words are extremely common in prose and contribute to a distinct lowering of stylistic tone in the passage. Further, this diminution of tone is achieved quite consciously. The addition of μέλλω, for instance, is superfluous. For grammatical intelligibility, it would be sufficient to retain τέτληκ', which governs the infinitive λέγειν in Euripides, and add line 499, which consists of the superfluous main verb μέλλω, a prepositional phrase, and a participial phrase. Aristophanes chooses to delete the elevated verb τέτληκ', however, and replace it with prosaic words, shifting the tone from that of high poetry to that of everyday speech and continuing a practice that we have seen elsewhere characterizes his use of *Telephus*.[52]

The scene following Dikaiopolis/Telephus's speech refers several times to Dikaiopolis' perceived status as a beggar, πτωχός, which reminds the audience of the liminal status he has temporarily assumed to bring about peace. His status as a πτωχός who is really a just citizen parallels Telephus's position as a πτωχός who is really a (Greek) king. References to the status of Dikaiopolis also function as emblematic reminders of the association established earlier between Euripidean tragedy and the presence of unheroic figures like beggars and cripples (*Acharnians* 411–13) that I described earlier as Aristophanes' visual marker for Euripidean realism. In *Acharnians*, the representation of the physical aspects of Euripides' (and perhaps others') *Telephus* thus occupies an important position. The metamorphosis of Dikaiopolis into Telephus is elaborately prepared by a protracted scene in which Dikaiopolis borrows the required costumes and props from an accommodating, but progressively more truculent, Euripides. His appearance is likewise emphasized in his

long speech to the Acharnian chorus. His reference to himself as a beggar has been discussed above.

These attributes are reiterated a little later when the semi-chorus, unpersuaded by Dikaiopolis/Telephus's defense of Spartan behavior, calls in its hero Lamachos to defend their interests. In fact, Lamachos's first lines after his grandiloquent entrance (572–74) address Dikaiopolis/Telephus's appearance directly: οὗτος σὺ τολμᾷς πτωχὸς ὢν λέγειν τάδε; "You there, do you, a beggar, dare to say these things?" (578). In addition, his speech explicitly recalls Dikaiopolis' own adaptation of the defense speech of Telephus discussed above. πτωχὸς ὢν and λέγειν are repeated in the same line, although at different metrical positions. Further, τολμᾷν appears to be the prosaic equivalent of τλῆναι, and seems designed to recall the τέτληκ' of the Telephus fragment (703 N[2]) from which Dikaiopolis quotes at *Acharnians* 497–99. Thus the entrance of Lamachos is constructed so as keep the attention of the audience focused on the unusual tragic attire of Dikaiopolis/Telephus and on the special malicious interpretation of it by Aristophanes.

As discussed earlier, the effect of such a move is twofold. First, on the metaphorical level, the liminal status of Dikaiopolis in his disguise continues to give him greater flexibility of movement than that exhibited by the enfeebled chorus or by Lamachos, whose stereotypical bluster and swagger will later coalesce around the *miles gloriosus*. Disguised as an outsider, Dikaiopolis is under no obligation to defend the status quo. Indeed, in the lines that follow, he is able to absorb the contemptuous references of Lamachos to his lowly status (578, 593) and counter them through contemptuous repetition (579, 594), a strategy exploited with great profit throughout Aristophanes.[53] The positional advantage he obtains from this strategy appears connected to the rhetorical *deinotes* he derives from his Telephean alias. Indeed, his first response to Lamachos reprises yet again the Euripidean couplet already twice discussed (578–79):

ὦ Λάμαχ' ἥρως, ἀλλὰ συγγνώμην ἔχε,
εἰ πτωχὸς ὢν εἶπόν τι κἀστωμυλάμην.

But Lamachos hero, forgive me
If, although a beggar, I have spoken and chattered something.

Again the repetitions from Euripides' couplet are striking and identifiable, especially as they have already been spoken or alluded to twice in the last hundred lines. συγγνώμην ἔχε, "forgive me," is synonymous with Euripides' μὴ μοι φθονήσητ', "Do not be angry." πτωχὸς ὢν, "although [I

am] a beggar," of course, is repeated verbatim, as at 497 and 578, while εἶπον, "I said," is used as the aorist of λέγειν, "to speak," which appears in the Euripides passage, as well as at 497 and 578.

The continuing presence of the Telephean alias for Dikaiopolis also allows him to work with great freedom in crafting effective rhetorical strategies: he is able to temporize regarding his identity until it can be revealed most dramatically. Thus the exasperation of Lamachos at having to defend his actions against the charges of a beggar (578) boils over again later in the passage, after Dikaiopolis has further provoked him by transforming his crest and helmet plume into instruments of self-purgation (584–88).[54] Lamachos's new question, ταυτὶ λέγεις σὺ τὸν στρατηγὸν πτωχὸς ὤν; "Do you, a beggar, say these things to a general?" (593) repeats his earlier one (578), with a shift in emphasis from the wretched condition of Dikaiopolis to the supposed dignity of Lamachos. Dikaiopolis' reply, however, differs markedly from that earlier in the passage when he was still extracting some advantage from the ambivalence of his position (594–95):

Δι. ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι πτωχός;
Λα. ἀλλὰ τίς γὰρ εἶ;
Δι. ὅστις; πολίτης χρηστός, οὐ σπουδαρχίδης.

Dik. Am I a beggar?
Lam. Well, who are you?
Dik Who am I? A useful citizen, no office seeker.

Once the question of status has been introduced into the discussion by Lamachos with his emphatic juxtaposition of στρατηγός and πτωχός, Dikaiopolis reveals his identity as a public-spirited citizen, contrasting it with the inflated self-worth of Lamachos and those like him.[55] To Lamachos's challenge of his right to address *a general* in this way, Dikaiopolis drops his costume and exchanges the liminal position of beggar for the citizen's insider status that confirms beyond any doubt his right to speak.[56] He accuses Lamachos of acting not out of aristocratic noblesse oblige but in the manner of other vulgar office seekers who live parasitically off the city they claim to patronize (595–619).[57] In so doing, Dikaiopolis turns the tables on Lamachos, who had attempted to exclude him on the basis of his lack of status, and denies the general access to the class privileges he feels he deserves.

In looking at *Telephus* in *Acharnians*, we have attempted to do two things, both of which complicate the representation of a Euripidean

hero that seems clear at first glance. First, in surveying the state of the Telephus story at the time of Aristophanes, we were able to see its relatively prominent place in popular myth, especially in the middle of the fifth century, when the subject was treated with varying degrees of specificity by Pindar and the three major tragedians—a fact that suggests the strong possibility that the Telephus story was covered by others as well. The totality of this evidence suggests that Telephus in *Acharnians*, although most highly indebted to Euripides' version of the story, may well have important, if no longer detectable, relations with the rest of the literary tradition, the presence of which suggest a more complex dialogical relationship underlying the acknowledged rapport between Euripides' *Telephus* and Aristophanes' *Acharnians*.

Second, I have attempted to show the complex ways in which Euripides' *Telephus* is used by Aristophanes to exploit the tragic hero's rhetorical *deinotes* successfully in the service of Dikaiopolis' desperate rhetorical situation, to parody the preciousness of Euripidean diction by juxtaposing it—indeed contaminating it—with the prosaic language of comedy, and to mock explicitly the realism of Euripides, exemplified by characters whose superficial bearing could be said (perhaps unfairly) to compromise tragedy's traditional dignity. Finally, we saw how the appearance of Telephus as a beggar king is exploited in *Acharnians* and how Euripides' *Telephus* 702 N^2 serves as a leitmotif that, in fact, becomes an important part of Dikaiopolis' rhetorical self-presentation.

All of this illustrates well the workings of dialogism as described by Bakhtin, particularly the way in which the carnivalization of the serious genres, particularly tragedy, is deployed polemically to undermine their elevated reputations—to the advantage of genres like comedy that seek to exploit the discomfiture of the high genres for their own benefit. In addition, by creating dramatic fictions that self-consciously replicate this generic conflict, these same elements work within *Acharnians* to drive the plot. The result is a double dialogism, internal and external, that works in tandem to elevate Old Comedy in general, and *Acharnians* in particular, at the expense of tragedy in general and, of course, Euripidean mannerism, with its precious conceits and cheapened heroics.

We shall now turn to *Thesmophoriazusae*, produced in 411, to see how Aristophanes' second dramatization of Euripides' *Telephus* reprises themes developed in *Acharnians*, but deploys them differently and with different consequences.[58] *Acharnians* concentrates on the physical aspect of Telephus, the benefits of his rhetorical skill, and the travestying of tragic dignity implied by the existence of the ragged king on stage. Such

an extensive representation of *Telephus* does not occur again in the plays of Aristophanes until the production of *Thesmophoriazusae*. It is alluded to, or quoted, however, in a number of plays that intervene and, later, in *Frogs*.[59]

Because of Aristophanes' continued exploitation of the Telephus motif, it is remarkable that *Thesmophoriazusae* shows almost no interest in the visual aspects of Telephus and their presumed moral import, although the play uses some of the same material as *Acharnians*, most prominently the hostage scene (Sommerstein 1994.6). The Relative of Euripides tries to win his freedom by threatening to slay the "child" of the woman (a skin full of wine, 730–64), which parallels the threat by Dikaiopolis to murder the "child" (a coal basket) of one of the old Acharnians who comprise the chorus (325–40)—both scenes borrowed from Euripides' play. *Thesmophoriazusae* instead focuses on aesthetic issues, specifically on the relationship of Aristophanic comedy to tragedy. In this context, Euripides' *Telephus*, as well as his *Palamedes*, *Helen*, and *Andromeda*, stand in for the mimetic strategy of tragedy as a whole.[60] The reason Euripidean tragedy occupies this position—the tragedy of Agathon seems implicitly rejected[61]—is not certain.[62] Bowie suggests (1993.218–25) that the timing of Aristophanes' full-scale consideration of the tragedy's relationship to comedy is related to the recent production of Euripides' *Helen*, a play that contains features closely associated with comedy.

Whatever the genesis of Aristophanes' decision to engage (Euripidean) tragedy directly, the contrasts between the Telephus story in *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae* are striking. Read synchronically, as one in a series of discrete, anti-Euripidean broadsides, *Thesmophoriazusae* stands out as an exception to Aristophanes' tendency to represent Euripides (focalized from the point of view of someone like Strepsiades in *Clouds*) as the representative of depraved modernity whose love of paradox and amoral impulses corrupts the moral basis of noble Aeschylean tragedy and contributes to the irredeemable decadence of today's youth.[63] The focus of *Thesmophoriazusae* on tragic and comic mimesis no doubt largely accounts for this shift.

Thesmophoriazusae's emphasis on mimetic failure, however, has important implications for Aristophanes' overall representation of Euripides: not only do his aesthetic choices on the tragic stage contribute to the delinquency of Athenian youth, his plots are shown to be dependent for their success on the hothouse atmosphere of tragedy itself. In the more freewheeling world of comedy, they are totally ineffective.[64] Thus

understood, Euripides remains the ludicrous figure of *Acharnians*, who trained his slave to say that he was both in and not in (396), and who still exasperates his listeners with paradoxical formulations like: "You may not hear what you will soon see" (*Thesmophoriazusae* 5). He is also the Euripides who, at the end of the play, must abandon tragic deliverance and adopt the conventions of comedy to rescue his Relative by using the sexual allure of a dancing girl to distract the Thracian policeman. Like Socrates, Euripides may well corrupt the Athenians; unlike him, however, he doesn't do it very well.

If we approach the representations of Telephus in Aristophanes diachronically as a succession of positions, atomic, and without living connections to what comes before or after them, we see Aristophanes continuing to attack Euripides, although from different angles. The successive representations have an accretive effect that constitutes the Aristophanic equivalent of "piling on" and that often persuade readers of the historicity of a literary feud.[65] Read dialogically, however, the differences between *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae* produce a different narrative, one that does not invalidate the first, but which challenges it on a number of points and creates an ambivalent tension within the representations of Euripides in Aristophanes that is true to the evidence of the plays.

I attempt to illustrate this dialogism between *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae* first by analyzing the hostage scene, of which both plays make explicit, although different, use. Second, I attempt to excavate some of the literary strata of the play, in the manner used above for the non-tragic background of Telephus, in order to show how the Telephus of *Thesmophoriazusae* is doubly dialogized—not only by Euripides' tragedy and by the competing Euripidean heroes who appear to attempt a rescue of Euripides' Relative, but also by other literary genres. The result of this twofold examination will show that the character of Telephus in *Thesmophoriazusae* is even more ambivalent than the Telephus from *Acharnians*, carnivalized as it is by its position at the center of multiple conflicting forces: from the complex interactions of Aristophanic comedy and (Euripidean) tragedy to Aristophanes' inevitably dialogical relationship to his own previous work.[66]

With the refusal of Agathon to exploit his effeminate appearance on behalf of Euripides, the Relative agrees to undergo depilation in order to infiltrate the women's Thesmophoria in disguise. Temporarily successful, he defends Euripides against the attacks of the women, arguing that their resentment is misplaced given the fact that Euripides, either by his

moderation or his ineptitude (the anti-Euripidean theme continues to resurface even in passages that appear to acquit him), has passed over many of their crimes and given them freedom to exercise their libidinous and deceitful practices with impunity (474–76). The suspicions of the women, however, are aroused, and they begin to question the Relative closely regarding his identity. They are interrupted by the arrival of the effeminate Cleisthenes, well known from *Acharnians*, who addresses them as ξυγγενεῖς τοὐμοῦ τρόπου, "my sisters in lifestyle" (574; trans. Sommerstein 1994), and informs them of a plot by Euripides to infiltrate the gathering (584–85).

The Relative is eventually discovered to be an imposter and placed under guard, while Cleisthenes goes to report the matter to the *prytaneis*, who are imagined to have authority over such matters. The Relative, however, is not without resources. After a choral ode, one of the women begins to shriek (689–91):

> ἆ ποῖ σὺ φεύγεις; οὗτος οὗτος οὐ μένεις;
> τάλαιν' ἐγὼ τάλαινα, καὶ τὸ παιδίον
> ἐξαρπάσας μοι φροῦδος ἀπὸ τοῦ τιτθίου.
>
> Ah, where are you going? Stop!
> Wretched, wretched me! He took my child
> from its nurse and got away!

The cause of her dismay is the Relative, who has stolen her "child" wrapped in swaddling and raced with it to a corner of the stage. Having temporarily altered the balance of power, the Relative retakes the initiative in his address to the women (692–95):

> κέκραχθι· τοῦτο δ' οὐδέποτε σὺ ψωμιεῖς,
> ἢν μή μ' ἀφῇτ'· ἀλλ' ἐνθάδ' ἐπὶ τῶν μηρίων
> πληγὲν μαχαίρᾳ τῇδε φοινίας φλέβας
> καθαιματώσει βωμόν.
>
> Scream away! You will never feed this one again
> If you don't release me. But here upon the thighbones,
> Struck by this knife, he will stain the altar
> With a blood-red spurt.

The theme of infanticide thus structures the seizure of the hostage by the Relative. What he does not yet realize is that the "child" he has stolen is, in fact, a wineskin and that the "spurt" to which he refers will be a gush of wine. This true state of affairs only intensifies the gravity of the

situation for the women, however, whose fondness for wine is a staple of Aristophanic comedy and whose attachment to the "child" is, therefore, strong.[67] Nevertheless, the hostage attempt of the Relative ultimately fails to secure his release, and, after discovering the true identity of his captive, he "sacrifices" the child, to the dismay of all.

Thesmophoriazusae's version of the *Telephus* hostage scene has a double intertextual affiliation, alluding at the same time to Euripides' *Telephus* and to Aristophanes' own staging of the Telephus scene in *Acharnians*.[68] Indeed, the seizing of the infant is the centerpiece of a complex web of Telephean motifs and quotations that help to structure *Thesmophoriazusae*. It has been argued that both the play's focus on disguise and Euripides' need to gain entrance to a forbidden place (here the women's festival) are also indebted to *Telephus*.[69] In addition, various lines of the comedy quote from it. The Relative's speech in defense of Euripides concludes (518–19):

κᾆτ' Εὐριπίδῃ θυμούμεθα,
οὐδὲν παθοῦσαι μεῖζον ἢ δεδράκαμεν;

Then are we (women) angry with Euripides,
We who have suffered no worse than we have done?

This conclusion is also from Euripides, perhaps based on Telephus's defense of himself (711 N²):[70]

εἶτα δὴ θυμούμεθα
παθόντες οὐδὲν μεῖζων ἢ δεδρακότες.

Then are we (men) angry
Since we'll have suffered nothing greater than we have done?

Other *Thesmophoriazusae* passages may also have a similar provenance, and the abundant parody of tragedy throughout the play, beyond the explicit parodies of dramatic scenes from *Palamedes*, *Helen*, and *Andromeda*, could well draw on *Telephus*.[71] Thus the hostage scene in *Thesmophoriazusae* is well situated within a rich intertextual environment that frequently evokes Euripides' *Telephus*.

We can see from the examples quoted above that the hostage scenes of *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae* are linked by a continuity of motif and expression attesting to Aristophanes' continued interest in the story for the articulation of comic action. Nevertheless, significant differences between the two representations make it impossible to treat the representation of *Telephus* in Aristophanes as an undifferentiated whole. First

of all, consider the different uses to which the scene is put in the two plays. I discussed earlier the degree to which the tragic Telephus had a particularly valuable function in *Acharnians* owing to the utility of his resourcefulness as a model for Dikaiopolis. To assume his identity, Dikaiopolis reasoned, would be to take on this aspect of his character and aid Dikaiopolis's own expressed (and unrealized) goal of exciting the pity of the chorus (383–84, 416–17). In the hostage scene, too, his tactics are rewarded, as the threat of violence to the coal basket is sufficient to disarm the sentimental Acharnians.

Dikaiopolis exploits *Telephus* to find a model of behavior that will allow him to outmaneuver his adversaries in the chorus. Proper sequencing of his actions is nevertheless crucial to his success, and, in this, he seems not to have followed the order inherited from Euripides. There the hostage scene occupies an intermediate position after the initial speech of the disguised beggar, a speech that may have been persuasive to some of the Greeks, just as Dikaiopolis' speech causes the Acharnian chorus to divide into rival halves (557–61). Some time after that point, perhaps after the arrival of a herald, Telephus's identity is revealed, and he responds by seizing Orestes. Dikaiopolis, by contrast, seizes the coal basket before he has assumed a disguise and before the full ramifications of his actions have been discerned by the chorus. He thus is able to bargain successfully with them, flattering their trust in their insensitivity to rhetorical appeal by offering to speak with his head on the chopping block, then shifting the focus of conflict away from them and on to Lamachos.

In *Thesmophoriazusae*, by contrast, the sequence of events is set to fail—ironically, it seems, as the Relative has a more authentic Telephean approach to the situation but lacks the rhetorical ability that made Telephus and his doppelgänger, Dikaiopolis, effective. Unlike Dikaiopolis, he appears in disguise from the beginning of the encounter with the women who comprise the chorus. But whereas Telephus and Dikaiopolis presented messages that appealed to the interests and beliefs of their audiences, the defense of Euripides by the Relative is abusive and does not attempt to appeal to the interests of the women.[72] The ultimate failure of the hostage taking is directly related to this lack. Having already made his antagonistic defense speech (unlike Dikaiopolis), the Relative can only negotiate for his own release when he takes his hostage. Having already infuriated his "primary" audience (the women), it is not surprising that he is unsuccessful.

Thus despite surface similarities at the level of plot, the two repre-

sentations of Telephus operate in very different ways and illustrate well how dialogism works at the macro-level of the text, creating the impression both of similitude between the two plays, because the reappearance of Telephus in *Thesmophoriazusae* suggests continuity, and of alterity, since the contrast between his function in the two plays produces a feeling of difference. It is in the irreducible space between these poles that dialogism allows us to keep both aspects in play and observe their interaction, with the result that the Telephus who appears in *Thesmophoriazusae* is not simply a comment on Euripides' but on Aristophanes' earlier version as well.

Yet the dialogical positioning of Telephus in *Thesmophoriazusae* comprises more than its relationship with Euripides' play, or even with *Acharnians*, for *Thesmophoriazusae* is a palimpsest of other texts as well, each exerting an influence over the others and on the comic effects produced by the play. I will consider two examples of this phenomenon, embedded allusions to the *Iliad* and to *Alcestis*, to illustrate some of the disturbances within the field that compete with *Telephus* for the attention of the spectators and complicate the interpretative situation of the play.[73]

The hostage scene of *Thesmophoriazusae* has already been discussed as indicative of the ambivalent attitude of the play toward both of its predecessors. In addition, it is replete with other texts. The reaction of Woman A and the chorus to the abduction is heavily influenced by tragic lament. Their language may be modeled on specific tragedies, but this cannot be determined with confidence. Our lack of precise knowledge on this subject, while regrettable, is not an insuperable difficulty. As I have already argued, tragic parody in Aristophanes must certainly have at least a double focus so as to be perceivable in terms of its specific referent both by the *sophoi* (who like this sort of thing) and by the casual spectators, for whom tragic diction, regardless of its provenance, represents an assertion of dignity that will be amusingly challenged in one way or another.[74] Thus the hostage scene of *Thesmophoriazusae* already operates in an intertextual context beyond that of simple reliance on Euripides' *Telephus*.

In addition, however, at least one reference is specific and identifiable. After the chorus expresses the strongest possible doubt as to whether the prayers of an impious hostage taker can be expected to have any purchase among the immortals, the Relative responds: μάτην λαλεῖτε τὴν δ' ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀφήσω, "You chatter in vain! I will not release her" (717). The last part of the line is an iambic version of a Homeric

line, Agamemnon's refusal to give up Chryseis, his war-prize, and the indirect cause of the plague ravaging the Achaian camp: τὴν δ' ἐγὼ οὐ λύσω, "I will not release her."[75] The picture of the Relative as Agamemnon *redivivus* is in itself a laughable spectacle, as it involves an old man, depilated, shaved, and dressed as a woman, impersonating Agamemnon, whose heroic status is not diminished in epic by his shortcomings as a commander. In addition, another level of comedy arises from the rapid shifts of the Relative's fictional identity, from festival participant, to hostage-taking Telephus, to Agamemnon, adversary of Telephus and father of the hostage, Orestes. On a certain level, then, the Relative as Telephus and Agamemnon is both perpetrator and victim of the hostage crisis, and while it is certainly too much to suggest that the scene's flirtation with child-murder alludes to Agamemnon's relationship with his own children, the juxtaposition of such incompatible identities as Telephus and Agamemnon is certainly ludicrous.

Further, the Relative's borrowing of an epic line in the context of a tragic impersonation intended to free him from captivity suggests that he already feels that, on a generic level, tragedy alone will be insufficient to bring about his rescue. This indication signals in advance the failure of Euripides' *Telephus* to effect that purpose, as well as the general failure of tragic mimesis chronicled in the rescue scenes drawn from Euripidean tragedy.[76] The Relative's epic iambs thus function as part of Aristophanes' implicit critique of tragedy as insufficiently realistic to provide solutions to real-world crises and contribute to the undermining of tragedy's authority by forcing it to speak as one of many genres rather than as a uniquely privileged discourse.

Finally, in addition to its position in the critique of tragedy as a whole, the phrase borrowed from Agamemnon affects the status of *Telephus* as an uncontested text for *Thesmophoriazusae*. If scenes borrowed from different genres—or scenes with only marginal relationships to hostage taking in the strict sense—help to structure events in *Thesmophoriazusae*, possibilities begin to emerge that complicate the situation far beyond the one implied by using the varied forms of *Telephus* as an interpretative key. Agamemnon's reference to releasing his captive is particularly ironic in view of the Relative's predicament. A further epic resonance may underlie the hostage scene, which Bowie compares to the incident in the *Cypria* where the infant Telemachus is seized and thrown before a plow to expose the deception of Odysseus, who had feigned madness in order to avoid joining the expedition against Troy (Bowie 1993.222). At all events, for a reading of *Thesmophoriazusae* that seeks to

assert the centrality of *Telephus* within the economy of the play, the borrowing from Homer interjects a discordant note that serves to suggest other possible models for reading in addition to the Telephean element that is clearly also an important part of the intertextual relationships present in *Thesmophoriazusae*.

A second example shows this process at work with regard to other texts. H. W. Miller compares at length (1948.177–79) the dramatic situation at the beginning of Euripides' play with the prologue of *Thesmophoriazusae* and clearly believes that major elements of the latter find more or less close parallels in the former. He attributes three passages from the prologue to *Telephus* and, if he is even partially correct, explicit quotation would encourage some in the audience to view the action as a comic reenactment of that play.[77]

At the same time, the prologue is heavily intertextual. Tragic style abounds, and it is unlikely that all of it derives from *Telephus*, including the precious diction that is parodied at the opening of the play (5–21), language that appears to have at least a spiritual kinship with *Acharnians* (396–400) and with the dissemination of scientific theory in *Clouds* (e.g., *Clouds* 160–64). In addition, the encounter with Agathon (29–265) suggests a second tragic author and features a *melos*, supposedly by Agathon, that he also sings (101–29). Thus despite whatever guiding force *Telephus* may possess in structuring this opening scene, its influence is diminished by the number of competing texts with which it is forced to contend.

This process can be seen quite explicitly in the conversation with Agathon. Before securing the cooperation of his Relative, Euripides asks Agathon to infiltrate the Thesmophoria and intercede with the women on his behalf.[78] Agathon's response immediately exceeds the Telephean subtext, however (193–99):

Ἀγ. ἐποίησάς ποτε,
"χαίρεις ὁρῶν φῶς, πατέρα δ'οὐ χαίρειν δοκεῖς"
Εὐ. ἔγωγε.
Ἀγ. μή νυν ἐλπίσῃς τὸ σὸν κακὸν
ἡμᾶς ὑφέξειν. καὶ γὰρ ἄν μαινοίμεθ' ἄν.
ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ὅ γε σόν ἐστιν οἰκείως φέρε.
τὰς συμφορὰς γὰρ οὐχὶ τοῖς τεχνάσμασιν
φέρειν δίκαιον, ἀλλὰ τοῖς παθήμασιν.

Aga. You once wrote, "You enjoy looking upon the light,
Do you not think your father does?"
Eur. I did.

Aga. Do not expect that we shall suffer your misfortune. We would be mad.
But you bear your own evil. For it is just to bear difficulty with
Suffering, not with scheming.

In his response, Agathon quotes Euripides' *Alcestis*, the well-known rejoinder of Pheres to his son Admetus (691). The epigrammatic formulation of the line seems to have insured its survival in popular consciousness. In *Clouds*, Aristophanes had used a distorted version of it as part of Pheidippides' justification of fatherbeating.[79] Agathon's citation of *Alcestis* is dramatically appropriate here and implies that in asking Agathon to go to the Thesmophoria in his place, Euripides is a cowardly Admetus, not a brave and resourceful Telephus. In this way, the intertextual element of the scene offers an entirely new way of characterizing the situation and works at cross purposes with the *Telephus* narrative onto which it is grafted.

Such a reading of Agathon's quotation of Euripides is further confirmed by the careful attention devoted to it. The scenes from *Alcestis* and *Thesmophoriazusae* are inverted in such a way as to maximize the comic contrast. In *Alcestis*, the immediate dramatic situation revolves around the conflict between Admetus's narcissistic assumption that his young life is inherently more valuable than anyone else's and his old father's indignation at the idea that he should be willing to die in place of his son. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, by contrast, the dynamics of age are precisely reversed. Euripides is reluctant to infiltrate the festival because of his gray hair and beard (190) and cites Agathon's particular fitness for the role (191–92):

σὺ δ' εὐπρόσωπος λευκὸς ἐξυρημένος,
γυναικόφωνος ἁπαλὸς εὐπρεπὴς ἰδεῖν.

But you have a beautiful face, white skin, clean-shaven,
With the voice of a woman, you are soft and pleasant to behold.

Agathon's youth and effeminate appearance, whether natural or the result of cultivation (cf. 148–52), are emphasized in Euripides' description. Six adjectival expressions are artfully balanced, three in each line. Adjectives beginning with εὐ- begin and end the series, and each expression occupies the same metrical position in the line.[80] Yet despite the differences in age and appearance that separate Agathon and Euripides in *Thesmophoriazusae*, it is the youthful Agathon who takes the part of the aged Pheres against the craven request of Euripides' Admetus. From this elaborate inversion, it is possible to see that Agathon's quotation of

Euripides is not just a one-liner to be discarded with the passing of the audience's laughter, but instead a miniature set piece inscribed within the *Telephus* prologue (itself a prelude to the Relative's more extensive portrayal).

This embedding has multiple consequences. On the one hand, the contrast between Telephus and Admetus produces a laughable spectacle, as Euripides is shown as potentially both and neither.[81] On the other, within the larger structure of *Thesmophoriazusae*, it complicates the interpretative situation by providing additional and incommensurable models for action alongside Euripides' *Telephus*—as does the presence of the *Iliad* quotation in the speech of the Relative (see above). These intertextual relationships together have an important effect on the status of *Telephus* within *Thesmophoriazusae* and dialogize its significance for the play as a whole.[82]

This chapter set out to investigate both diachronic and dialogical aspects of Euripides' *Telephus* in *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae*. To begin with, however, I argued for the importance of setting *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae* in the (largely conjectural) context of the Telephus myth in Greek literature. This context, although lacunose, gives clear indications that the myth would have been well known to much of Aristophanes' audience by way of its familiarity with epic and epinician poetry, in addition to the story's evident popularity in tragedy. We have direct evidence that Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides all staged versions of the Telephus story, in view of which it seems likely that other tragedians did the same. Thus I raised the possibility that these other representations of the Telephus story might also have found their way into the parodies of Aristophanes and that, therefore, to assume that the comedies derive from Euripides' play alone, while justifiable on the level of what can be demonstrated, was to over generalize in such a way as to see *Thesmophoriazusae*'s intertextual resonances as simpler than they probably are.

With this important qualifying principle in mind, I focused on the representation of Euripides' play in *Acharnians*, to the extent that it can be reconstructed, arguing that the comedy showed a strong ambivalence regarding Telephus and his creator, Euripides. On the one hand, Telephus's unheroic willingness to disguise his true identity and his undignified appearance as a beggar serve Aristophanes as icons of what he represents as Euripides' laughable abandonment of tragedy's traditional dignity and aloofness. On the other hand, Telephus's rhetorical *deinotes*

makes him especially effective for driving a comic plot, as his resourceful persistence offers effective models of behavior for Dikaiopolis. These two essentially contrary aspects of Telephus's persona are thoroughly intermingled in *Acharnians*, and neither is reducible to the other. Thus Aristophanes in *Acharnians* gives us a Telephus with a dual significance: he is used to mock Euripides, while the advantages derived from the character's fluency are used to drive the designs of the hero.

Thesmophoriazusae continues the representation of Telephus inherited from *Acharnians*, but deploys it in critically different ways. Gone is the emphasis on Euripides' travesty of tragic dignity in the beggar king. True, the hostage scene offers abundant physical comedy in both plays, and, in this sense, the Relative's wineskin is a fitting successor to Dikaiopolis' coal basket, but *Thesmophoriazusae* exhibits a complex attitude towards its predecessor. *Thesmophoriazusae* quite clearly invokes the tradition of *Telephus* as found in *Acharnians* with its use of similar scenes and language; at the same time, it swerves from its model in important ways, particularly as it undermines the assumptions of *Acharnians* regarding the connection between rhetorical fluency and comic effectiveness. As such, the representation of *Telephus* in *Thesmophoriazusae* is a part of Aristophanes' complex exploration of the limitations of tragic mimesis that also finds expression in the other major parodies in the play, Euripides' *Palamedes*, *Helen*, and *Andromeda*.

The presence of these plays with *Telephus* also affects directly the way Euripides' *Telephus* functions in *Thesmophoriazusae*. With so much competition, its effectiveness as a structuring principle for the play is greatly limited—even if we were to take the most liberal estimation of the number of *Thesmophoriazusae* passages derived from *Telephus*. In fact, the intertextual elements of the play are even more strongly emphasized than is suggested by the presence of the three other Euripides plays in *Thesmophoriazusae*. The prologue and the hostage scene, places where the influence of *Telephus* as a structuring mechanism is most strongly felt, also contain important and explicit allusions to other works and imply models of action that are rhetorically plausible. Even if these models were absolutely in harmony with the Telephean elements of the play, their effect would be to dilute the unique appropriateness of *Telephus* as a source of action for *Thesmophoriazusae*. As it is, however, the models they suggest (Agamemnon and Admetus in place of Telephus) are both laughably incongruous and incompatible with the primacy of *Telephus* within the play. Thus the effect of *Telephus* here is reduced far beyond

its previous level, even as *Thesmophoriazusae* attempts to present the figure of the lame king as a reprise of his evidently popular appearance in *Acharnians*.

Finally, it should be added that these two appearances of *Telephus* in *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae* themselves stand in a dialogical relationship. *Thesmophoriazusae* fails to ratify the iconic significance of *Telephus* as developed in *Acharnians* and offers another way of using the motif. Such a tacit rejection of *Acharnians* implies that the representation of *Telephus* there was not universally valid but one approach among many—and one conditioned by special conditions. In this way, *Thesmophoriazusae* offers an implicit critique of *Acharnians* that, from a rhetorical perspective, anyway—maybe even one shared by some of the spectators at *Thesmophoriazusae*—limits Aristophanes' ability to portray *Telephus* as yet again a travesty of the genre.

Despite the challenge of responding to the critique of a play written twelve years later, *Acharnians* is nevertheless not without resources for limiting the sway of *Thesmophoriazusae*'s verdict.[83] Indeed, its relatively coherent and consistent application of *Telephus*, in contrast to the fractured and conflicted representation found in *Thesmophoriazusae*, implicitly argues that the contradictory representation of *Telephus* found in *Thesmophoriazusae* is marginal and of less inherent significance than the "original" version from *Acharnians*. This argument is given further support by the passing references to *Telephus* in the other plays of Aristophanes. We have already seen how references to *Telephus* in *Clouds* make use of Telephus as an icon of squalid destitution unfairly elevated by his rhetorical *deinotes*. While not identical to the representation of Telephus in *Acharnians*, the version of *Clouds* is much closer to that of Dikaiopolis than to that of the Relative.

More specifically to the point is the agon of *Frogs*, which also has the advantage of postdating *Thesmophoriazusae* and so being in a position to "answer" the implicit charges of that play. In fact, Aeschylus's first speech refers to Euripides as στωμυλιοσυλλεκτάδης ("collector of chattering verses," 841), πτωχοποιός ("creator of beggars," 842), and ῥακιοσυρραπτάδης ("rag stitcher," 842).[84] Thus in his opening speech, Aeschylus alludes to the fact that his critique of Euripides, in the manner of *Acharnians*, will represent him as a creator of Telephus-like characters. Dionysus later attempts to quiet the unruly contestants for the Chair of Poetry, telling Euripides to take care lest Aeschylus in anger split his skull and pour out *Telephus*, a play that we are to assume represents the essence of his being (855). Euripides responds that he is prepared to do

battle with Aeschylus, having brought with him the sinews of his tragedies, among which he singles out *Telephus* in particular as providing the ammunition necessary to ensure a successful contest (860–64).

These passages are especially significant in light of *Thesmophoriazusae*. On the one hand, *Telephus* is presented as an icon for Euripidean tragedy's undignified bearing. On the other, it represents the sinews of his tragedy, whose use, its author imagines, will allow him to win the day. The ambivalent position thus expressed in *Frogs* has the effect of reprising *Acharnians*' double focus on just these two aspects of *Telephus*. In this way, the testimony of *Frogs* allows *Acharnians* to speak by literary ventriloquism and to reassert *Telephus*'s iconic significance within the Aristophanic corpus. *Frogs*' rebuttal does not invalidate the critique of *Acharnians* made by *Thesmophoriazusae*, which maintains its ability to outflank *Acharnians* (and the plays that tend to support it) by staging its own version of *Telephus* outside of *Acharnians*' ability to signify. The effect of the *Frogs* passages, rather, is to ensure that the balance between the two essentially incompatible representations of *Telephus* is preserved, allowing both plays to function as penetrating, if incomplete, critiques of each other.

6 Conclusion

The Centrifugal Style

> Zeus, who thunders on high, made women to be an evil to mortal men, with a nature to do evil. And he gave them a second evil to be the price for the good they had: whoever avoids marriage and the sorrows that women cause, and will not wed, reaches deathly old age without anyone to tend his years.
> —Hesiod, *Theogony*

> Women are evil. Still, citizens, it is not possible to live without the evil.—Susarion

Susarion didn't think it would end like this. After the putative inventor of Old Comedy had been abandoned by his wife, he made his way to Athens, entered what passed for a theater, and declaimed a few lines in iambic trimeter. Maybe all he wanted was to get something off his chest, raise a few laughs, acquire a reputation for wisdom among his peers. That he was borrowing his material from Hesiod's *Theogony*, and God knows what else, may not have occurred to him. There was no great virtue in originality anyway, and the capable public enunciation of speech far overshadowed in importance its provenance.

In reconstructing the tribulations of Susarion, I follow the account of the Byzantine pedant John Tzetzes. It has no value as literary history, of course, and the bit about being abandoned by his wife is probably, like so many other bits of ancient biography, an inference from the lines attributed to him. As these are the only verses ascribed to Susarion, we don't have a lot to go on. Still the quotation, taken with the passage from Hesiod quoted above, suggest an awareness on the part of Tzetzes that

the intertextual, poly-generic dimension of Old Comedy is somehow true to its roots. If his story isn't true, it should be, for it illustrates well the shifting generic foundation upon which all verbal creation is constructed—the fact that even for the founder there is always a predecessor and, therefore, always an agon, as Bakhtin argues, a struggle with the earlier word that is never conclusive.

It is particularly interesting that the very textual interaction that we have been discussing in the context of Aristophanic comedy should have been at the center of Tzetzes' story of Susarion, a story from which Tzetzes could extrapolate a foundation myth for Old Comedy.[1] His instincts here are sure. The thematic connection with Hesiod establishes a link between Old Comedy and the moralizing tradition most evident in *Works and Days* but present, as the above quotation demonstrates, in *Theogony* as well. This is not a simple matter of repetition. As Bakhtin says (1986.108): "But as an utterance . . . no one sentence, even if it has only one word, can ever be repeated: it is always a new utterance (even if it is a quotation)."

As we have just seen in our examination of Aristophanic comedy, Susarion's repetition comes with a difference. The central assumption of the moral-didactic tradition is that change is possible—or at least that human aspirations can be appropriately restrained and productively channeled. Thus if Hesiod's shiftless brother Perses heeds the poet's advice, his material condition will be vastly improved. Even in the paradox quoted above, a proper estimation of what is possible for human beings will allow a man to take an appropriate view of marriage. Some problems may be insoluble; nevertheless, as Hesiod explains elsewhere, some prudent choices regarding a prospective bride will simplify things greatly (*Works and Days* 695–705):

> Bring home a wife to your house when you are of the right age, while you are not far short of thirty years, nor much above; this is the right age for marriage. Let your wife have been grown up four years, and marry her in the fifth. Marry a maiden, so that you can teach her careful ways, and especially marry one who lives near you, but look well about you and see that your marriage will not be a joke to your neighbors. For a man wins nothing better than a good wife, and, again, nothing worse than a bad one, a greedy soul who roasts her man without fire, strong though he may be, and brings him to a raw old age.

Although outwardly similar, Hesiod's advice differs substantially from the Susarion quotation. Gone is the Hesiodic assumption that

some kind of mediation is possible between the two equally unpleasant prospects of living with women or without them. Susarion, instead, puts the experience in the mouth of a presumably aggrieved husband whose public lamentation, no more the disinterested advice of an older brother, is the only option that remains. Hesiod's moralizing can no longer do him any good. Put in terms of generic interaction, there appears to be an effort to undermine Hesiod in the Susarion quotation. Hesiod's pronouncements are clearly alluded to, but even if they are able to define Susarion's problem, they are nevertheless inadequate for remedying it. Susarion is suffering, but Hesiod, too, or at least his reputation as a moral authority, must pay.

The intertextual resonance of the Susarion fragment probably goes further, however. One of the striking things about it, as noted above, is its abandonment of Hesiod's lofty tone of admonition and earnest advice. Here the narrative voice is on precisely the same level as that of his subject matter, the level of carnivalized literature, as Bakhtin regularly notes.[2] Iambic poetry often assumed a similar rhetorical posture, with the narrator complaining about the wrongs done to him. The animus of poor Susarion is certainly filtered through the misogyny of the iambographer Semonides of Amorgos, whose lengthy diatribe (frag. 7 West), composed, like the complaint of Susarion, in iambic trimeter, compares women to different sorts of animals, nearly all unpleasant.

But such a rhetorical strategy always has a hidden cost. This connection to the iambographic tradition is important in the context of my reading of Aristophanes. As I attempt to show, deformation is always *reciprocal*. This principle applies to Susarion's case as well. In order to position himself as an effective critic of Hesiodic advice, Susarion must portray himself as a man who is suffering. Yet his suffering may not have been necessary. For example, he may not have observed the care that Hesiod sedulously recommends a man employ in choosing a good wife. A man who is suffering in *this* way is a man who has failed to heed good advice (Hesiod's) or, at least, a man for whom that advice has come too late. He is also, therefore, a comic figure, something of a fool, one who, from the perspective of the performer, positions himself a little below his audience, which may or may not suffer as he does.[3] In this way, then, by portraying himself in the manner of the unhappy iambographer and using his personal suffering as evidence, Susarion dramatizes the dialogical interaction between himself, Hesiod, and the entire moralizing tradition of iambic poetry. This interaction works to the detriment of all concerned. In order to position himself rhetorically to critique the

moral-didactic tradition of Hesiod, Susarion must portray himself as a victim, a strategy that, in order to be credible, must cast him as a fool.[4]

The extensive intertextual relations beneath the surface of the Susarion fragment are paradigmatic for the textual interactions I have been examining. That these should be present in a text thought to be from the earliest name in Athenian comedy is not surprising in itself. As Bakhtin explains (1981.279), no one but Adam, the namer of things, ever spoke in a complete vacuum. But it seems clear from the foregoing analysis, incomplete as it is, that we are dealing in Susarion with an aspect of language that is complicated exponentially in the comedies of Aristophanes. This book has only touched on a few of the relationships that Aristophanes puts into play, and its general thesis is capable of extensive elaboration. I have attempted to offer readings that are detailed enough to avoid the impression of excessive generality, and I chose a sufficiently wide range of scene types, metrical styles, and genres of intertext to make it clear that we are discussing a phenomenon diffused throughout Aristophanic comedy rather than concentrated in a specific place, for example, in the highly self-conscious *parabasis*. Some may question the details of interpretation of individual passages. It will be difficult, I think, to challenge the general validity of the claims that I make about the ambivalent outcomes that follow from Aristophanes' promiscuous use of language.

In sum, these chapters offer important qualifications to traditional narratives about Aristophanic comedy. Although it is generally conceded that Aristophanic humor works on multiple levels, criticism of the plays nevertheless often assumes a consistent trajectory and treats the plays' cultural meanings, their various political affiliations and literary allegiances, as fixed and knowable. The raw material in Aristophanes for such analyses is abundant, and the attraction that that raw material has exerted on scholars is understandable.[5]

Nevertheless, monolithic theses about Aristophanic comedy are impossible to maintain with consistency, and confronted with breakdowns in interpretive schemata, writers have occasionally ignored problematic passages altogether or, more frequently, consoled themselves with a distinction between essential and ephemeral, assigning to unruly and anarchic material the status of unserious *geloia*, "laughable things," in contrast to the more compliant exempla that express the proper measure of politically correct Aristophanic *spoudaia*, "serious things." References to art and artistic culture in Aristophanes have often been relegated to the realm of *geloion*, despite the fact that they, by their sheer bulk, should exert a strong gravitational pull of their own.

I have emphasized just this sort of material in this book, seeking in its intertextual dynamics to balance the emphasis on political history that has occupied many students of Aristophanic comedy. The result is a dialectical relationship between artistic creation and political orientation that does not permit the resolution of one category into another and always allows the comic writer the luxury of sliding from one register of meaning and representation to another.

Political material is clearly well represented in Aristophanes, and despite my insistence in taking seriously the interactions of language on the literary, artistic level, I do not mean to banish it from our consideration. It would be pointless to try to convert Aristophanic comedy into a wholly literary phenomenon, divorced from the realities of citizen life. In trying to restore a balance in emphasis, however, I have attempted to remove the division between political and non-political that implicitly structures much that has been written on the subject. By privileging the status of language as a vehicle for social interaction over the institutions and practices that it helps to create, I have attempted to allow both of these aspects of Aristophanic comedy to speak with each other in mutually relativizing and highly ambivalent ways. The result is a multitude of comic vectors originating from Aristophanes but deployed along different trajectories.

According to this method of reading, the conservative orientation of Aristophanic comedy, generally recognized by scholars, is ironized by centrifugal forces that interrogate its basic premises. These forces are often revealed by the intertextual dimensions of the text, particularly in the interaction of literary genres. As Bakhtin describes the process: "Here the dialogic nature of heteroglossia is revealed and actualized; languages become implicated in each other and mutually animate each other."[6] These interactions are not, therefore, ephemeral or eccentric in any sense, but, properly understood, they prevent the emergence of a single dominant interpretive construct. Within the context of fifth-century Athenian society, they contribute beyond measure to the ability of Aristophanic comedy to constitute itself as a supremely (self-) critical art. Attention to them is crucial for the constitution of a truly sociological poetics.

An approach such as this no doubt was expedient in comedy, where open competition with rivals was the rule, and criticism was apparently more effective, as it was more novel. Such criticism did not go unanswered, however, at least among Aristophanes' peers. In this context, the almost complete loss of their work is to be particularly regretted, for its

survival would have added immeasurably to the rich effects we find in Aristophanes. Although Cratinus and Ameipsias were not Aristophanes, neither were they scattering nuts. Both engaged in complex intertextual warfare with Aristophanes and, no doubt, others as well.

In fact, such battles must have been the rule rather than the exception during the relatively brief *floruit* of Old Comedy. In such a scenario, comic and tragic dramas are not simply performance events but cultural icons, with histories far more lasting than their brief hour upon the stage. As such, the boundaries between the plays also break down, and Aristophanes' *Knights* becomes the subject of Cratinus's *Wine Flask*, just as *Clouds* generates a meta-drama disguised as its revision. All of this indicates, in my view, that the open-ended polysemy that characterizes the interaction of language in Aristophanes on the micro level has an institutional parallel in the relationships between the comic writers.[7]

Viewed in this way, the dramatic competition never ends, even with the decision of the judges. This phenomenon is not limited to comedy, of course, but is true of literature in general—even of all utterances. Just as no one but the "mythical Adam" gets the first word, so no one is truly permitted the last. Michael Holquist's paraphrase of Bakhtin expresses the first part of this proposition well (1990.60; emphasis in original):

> An utterance is never *in itself* originary: an utterance is always an answer . . . Before it means any specific thing, an utterance expresses the general condition of each speaker's addressivity, the situation of not only being preceded by a language system that is "always already there," but preceded as well by all of existence, making it necessary for me to answer for the particular place I occupy.

Bakhtin himself takes up the second part of the proposition in his response to a question posed by the editorial staff of the journal *Novy Mir* concerning the state of literary studies in the then Soviet Union. Here he takes a hard line on all theories of textual immanence (1986.4; emphasis in original):

> Works break through the boundaries of their own time, they live in centuries, that is, in *great time* and frequently (with great works, always) their lives there are more intense and fuller than are their lives within their own time.

As this book comes to an end, it is necessary to look in terms of Bakhtin's "great time," the historical perspective that produces utterances that respond to the past and, to paraphrase Holquist's reading

of Bakhtin, shape the addressivity of successive generations of readers and viewers. If the meaning of the plays of Old Comedy was ceaselessly under negotiation even by those who were in the best position to understand them fully, then that process was not driven (as ours often necessarily is) by the need to acquire fuller, more complete, or more accurate information. In this context, it is perhaps useful to think of drama as a rather lengthy utterance. The responses that follow, then, whether literary or nonliterary, modify and develop just the sort of ambivalence that I have attempted to chart from within. Thus the centrifugal effects of Aristophanic style also have a mirror in the movement of literary interpretation through great time, ever inclusive and open to the next response.

Notes

Introduction

1. Carrière 1979 and Rösler 1986 feature Bakhtin in their studies. Goldhill 1991 discusses carnival culture in his chapter on Aristophanes, and it is the focal point in Edwards 1993. Most comprehensive is von Möllendorf 1995, whose book is explicitly focused on the Aristophanic grotesque.

2. Bakhtin 1968. Major studies of carnival in the context of Bakhtin's other work are Clark and Holquist 1984, Emerson and Morson 1990, and Holquist 1990.

3. Bakhtin 1968 provides abundant documentation of these bodily phenomena drawn from the Middle Ages. He sees their origin, however, as much older and derived from the popular traditions of laughter from preliterate societies. From there, they are preserved in festival traditions and in literary adaptations. With regard to the latter, Bakhtin is particularly interested in the parodic and serio-comic genres of Greco-Roman antiquity as having played a crucial role in the transmission of carnival laughter to the European Middle Ages and Renaissance.

4. *Acharnians* 633–40. Aristophanes' career begins with *Banqueters* in 427 B.C.E. and ends with *Aiolosokon* and *Cocalus*, which were produced by his son Araros after Aristophanes' death, sometime after 388. The eleven plays we have are spread across nearly the full spectrum of his career: *Acharnians* (425), *Knights* (424), *Clouds* (423: first version; second version revised c. 420–17, never produced. For the evidence see Dover 1968.lxxx), *Wasps* (422), *Peace* (421), *Birds* (414), *Lysistrata* (411), *Thesmophoriazusae* (411), *Frogs* (405), *Ecclesiazusae* (393), *Wealth* (388).

5. Slater 2002.9–10 describes well the slide Aristophanes, and perhaps others, were able to make, playing on the ambivalence of *didaskalos:* from "teacher of the chorus" to "teacher" of the demos. The combination of serious and comic features (*spoudogeloion*) is, for Bakhtin, one of the crucial indicators of literature with carnival links. In Aristophanes, the conjunction is virtually institutionalized.

6. On a more direct level, the mutability of character is itself an important comic characteristic, from Dikaiopolis' impersonation of Telephus in *Acharnians*, to the multiple personalities of Euripides in *Thesmophoriazusae*, and the complicated exchanges of (Heracles') identity that Dionysus and Xanthias undergo in *Frogs*.

7. The most comprehensive account is that of de Ste. Croix 1972, whose Aristophanes is clearly a shill for aristocratic attitudes. Edwards 1993 argues for an overall conservative orientation on the part of Aristophanes. Konstan

1995.15–28, offers a nuanced reading of the ideological structure of *Wasps* that highlights its attempt "to valorize the upper-class ideals of withdrawal and privatism" (p. 27). See also Carter 1986. While I do not disagree with these general conclusions, the competitive pressures on Aristophanic comedy did not allow it to be complacently in the service of a single ideology. For a new attempt to balance these competing claims, see Platter 2005.

8. Bakhtin 1981.273. See also his remarks (p. 300) on the need for "*sociological stylistics*" (emphasis in original).

9. See also DeMan 1983. For the intellectual milieu out of which Bakhtin emerged, see Clark and Holquist 1984, Emerson and Morson 1990, and Bernard-Donals 1994.

10. Rubino 1993.141–42; see also Barta et al. 2001.2.

11. The Russian is *nezavershennost'*. For a full discussion of its significance for Bakhtin, see Emerson and Morson 1990.36–38.

12. The details of the arrest are unclear. For a discussion of the evidence, see Holquist 1990.8–9 and Clark and Holquist 1984.120–45.

13. This continues to be the best known of Bakhtin's works, particularly the Introduction, in which he lays out the basic characteristics of carnival culture. Emphasis on other aspects of Bakhtin's work in the West owes much to Kristeva 1969 and 1980. See also Todorov 1984.

14. This is one of the most important reasons for Bakhtin's characterization of the Platonic dialogue as one of the foundation texts of serio-comic, carnival literature. Plato's Socrates, the "wise" man who denies the possibility of human wisdom, represents one of the most important and pervasive Menippean elements found in the philosophical dialogues of Lucian and others; see Bakhtin 1984.

15. So Bakhtin 1986.132 and 1981.125. See also Clark and Holquist 1984.272 and Emerson and Morson 1990.433–60.

16. Bakhtin 1981.213, 218–19; see also Platter 2001.57–59.

17. "Epic" consciousness is at the opposite end of the spectrum from that of the "novel," the style of composition (including the genre of the novel itself) that performs for later periods what the carnivalized genres do for antiquity. Within this dichotomy, ancient comedy can also be described as sharing the features of the novel and, therefore, as "novelized." For the distinction between epic and novel, see the essay of the same name, which appears in English as the first essay of *The Dialogic Imagination* (Bakhtin 1981).

18. Bakhtin 1984.122; see also Bakhtin 1968.7.

19. Cf. Bakhtin 1984.125: "From the very beginning, a decrowning glimmers through the crowning. And all carnivalistic symbols are of such a sort: they always include within themselves a perspective of negation (death) or vice versa. Birth is fraught with death, and death with new birth." See also p. 164.

20. This characteristic helps to link the carnivalized genres to the moral vision of ancient philosophy and its latter-day continuators. See Hadot 2001 for

ancient philosophy as an art of living. Foucault 1978 and 1986, too, focuses on the relationship of philosophy to selfhood. The preface of Foucault 1985 applies the same principle to his own work: "What is philosophy today—philosophical activity—I mean, if it is not the critical work that thought brings to bear on itself?" (pp. 8–9).

21. Prominent practitioners and examples of the genre, beyond the third-century Cynic writer Menippus, of whose work virtually nothing survives, are Lucian (second century C.E.) in Greek and, in Latin, Marcus Terentius Varro's *Menippean Satires* (first century B.C.E.), as well as the *Satyricon* of Petronius (first century C.E.). The only complete example of a Menippean satire is Seneca's *Pumpkinification of the Divine Claudius* (first century C.E.). For a study of the genre, see most recently Relihan 1993.

22. The following is drawn from the list given in Bakhtin 1984.114–18, where the numeration is the same as that given here.

23. In tragic parody in Aristophanes, comedy and tragedy are mutually implicated in the ridiculous incongruencies that ensue from their juxtaposition. Despite the pretensions of comedy to "wisdom," it is tragedy that has the most to lose in these encounters. Thus both genres are deformed—but not equally.

24. Similarly, Bakhtin identifies a preference in Menippean satire for unusual states of consciousness that "destroy the epic and tragic wholeness of the individual and his fate." By being "other" than himself, "he loses his finalized quality and ceases to mean only one thing" (item 8, above).

25. The work is not a Menippean satire, but its extreme inter-generic consciousness clearly identifies it as part of a carnivalized genre. There is, after all, nothing intrinsically superior about Menippean satire per se. Instead, for Bakhtin, the term occupies a rhetorical space convenient for organizing the broad range of strategies characteristic of carnivalized literature.

26. Bakhtin 1981.344. As I have been arguing, however, they do not lose all of their force but preserve the ability to exert their own deforming effects on the destination text. Cf. Bakhtin 1981.410, who refers to a parallel process at work in the novel: "The dialogic nature of heteroglossia is revealed and actualized: languages become implicated in each other and mutually animate each other." This process is positive from the perspective of the exploration of language but deadly for the claims of either text to have the final word.

27. Emerson and Morson 1990.15–62. As these concepts are inseparable in practice, the decision is made for heuristic purposes. The other two are "unfinalizability," which refers to the surplus of meaning that leaves people, texts, and situations ever open to the process of being revised, and "prosaics," a term of their own devising by which Emerson and Morson describe the linguistically open world of novelistic consciousness and the complex, "unfinalizable" relationships that result from it.

28. To take only two of the most obvious, *Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics*, one of Bakhtin's most important works, exists in three forms (the third more

implied than real): the original, published in 1929 just before his exile, the 1963 version of the book that involves substantial revision, including the addition of a major section on the generic precursors of Dostoevsky, and a late text entitled "Towards a Reworking of the Dostoevsky Book," which is printed as an appendix to the English translation of the 1963 edition (cited as Bakhtin 1984).

Even more baffling and fundamentally unsolvable is the case of the disputed texts from the 1920s. There is a strong anecdotal tradition that *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* and *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, books that appeared as the work of Bakhtin's associates, Valentin Voloshinov and Pavel Medvedev, respectively, were, in fact, written by Bakhtin himself. Emerson and Morson survey the evidence and acknowledge the difficulties; ultimately, however, they argue against the attribution. The question nevertheless remains controversial, and it seems unlikely that a consensus will soon emerge. See Emerson and Morson 1990.101–19, Clark and Holquist 1984.146–70, and Todorov 1984.6–13. I refer to these works by the names of their putative writers less out of conviction that Voloshinov and Medvedev are the sole authors than in recognition of the fact that Bakhtin never publicly clarified his relationship to these texts. Based on the present state of our knowledge, it seems most accurate to use bibliographical conventions to indicate a separation between "their" texts and "his." Nevertheless, this traditional philological-historical problem has a particular Bakhtinian spin to it. See Emerson and Morson 1990.67–71 for the "loophole word" as a tactic for allowing an author or a narrator to distance herself from her speech.

29. Utterance in Bakhtin is a meta-grammatical category, something equivalent to a response, an intention, or a turn to speak. Thus it can comprise units much greater than a single sentence (the largest category of strictly grammatical analysis) or much smaller, presumably down to the nonverbal gesture or even the explicit failure to respond. Bakhtin's emphasis on the utterance as the most appropriate level of analysis explains in large part his criticism of de Saussure and of linguistics in general as an ancillary discipline crucially limited by its object of study and in need of the dialogic supplement Bakhtin termed metalinguistics. See Bakhtin 1984.183, Kristeva 1980.66, and Todorov 1984.24–28, 82.

30. I do not mean to personify the (inter-) text or to imply that intertextual relations take place simply, unbeknownst to readers. Without certain types of readers able and disposed to perceive it, there is no perception of dialogism in a text, literary or otherwise. I do, however, mean to suggest that intertextual material, when it is released into the world in any sort of utterance, takes on a life of its own as it is processed by different sorts of readers, with varying interests, abilities, and values. In this way, it is similar to the general phenomenon of writing, as Socrates comments in *Phaedrus* (275d4-e5).

31. See Bakhtin 1981.276, 293; Emerson and Morson 1990.50–51. Cf. also Bakhtin 1981.66: "It must not be forgotten that monoglossia is always in essence relative. After all, one's own language is never a single language; in it there are

always survivals of the past and a potential of other-languagedness that is more or less sharply perceived by the working literary and language consciousness."

32. See Fish, "How Ordinary is Ordinary Language?" in Fish 1980; more recently, see Fish 1994. Cf. Kristeva's characterization (1980.65) of Bakhtin's "literary word" as "an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a *point* (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character), and the contemporary or earlier cultural context" (emphases in original).

33. Bakhtin 1981.280. Cf. Bakhtin 1984.287, 289, and 293.

34. So Kristeva 1980.77: "Within epic monologism we detect the presence of the 'transcendental signified' and 'self-presence.'"

35. *Works and Days* 110–201.

36. Bakhtin 1984.284 comments indirectly on this representation of Prometheus, comparing him to a polyphonic author who "creates . . . living beings who are independent of himself and with whom he is on equal terms." For the philanthropy of Prometheus, see Aeschylus *Prometheus Bound* 10, 247–54, 442–506; Hesiod *Works and Days* 48–49.

37. Epinician poetry is particularly interesting in this regard. Nicholson 2001 argues for the presence of "carnival" features in Pindar, and despite the genre's evident self-styling as "high poetry," the ideological demands under which the epinician poet labors are considerable and may well be sufficient to hybridize the genre in other ways as well. The need of the poet to "idealize the present" in the form of the victorious athlete by linking his *arete* with its mythological (often genealogical) progenitors puts him in a double bind with regard to the absolute superiority of the past. There is thus a good case to be made that the tortured polytropism between the myths in epinician poetry and the athlete whose career they are supposed to illuminate is a symptom of that strain. Cicero tells the story (*de Orat.* 2.86.351–53) of how the Scopidae, the employers of Simonides, withheld part of his wages because of what they regarded as his excessive praise of the twin sons of Zeus, the Dioscouroi, at the expense of their own glory. This cautionary tale ends when, at a celebratory banquet given by the Scopidae, Simonides is called outside by a *pair of young men*. While he is away, the building collapses, killing those inside. Among other things, the anecdote testifies to a strong awareness of the tension between past and present in epinician poetry *already in antiquity*. This awareness is even more apparent in Quintilian (*Instit. Orat.* 11.2.11–16), who identifies the source of Cicero's story and alludes to numerous other versions, the existence of which suggests a popular story with broad resonance.

38. Other strategies are possible as well. The most striking is the appearance of Thersites in the *Iliad*, who is allowed to criticize the conventions of epic warfare along the same lines as Achilles but from the anti-epic perspective of a common soldier (2.225–41). Thus Homer allows rather direct criticism of epic ideology, but marginalizes it by putting it in the mouth of the despised Thersites

and, in so doing, marginalizes the dissident voice of Achilles as well. Finally, the ambiguity of Thersites as a generic figure with close links to the traditions of iambic poetry, where his clownishness may well have been conventional, points at the possibility of an epic-iambic alliance that grounds on a deeper level the surface antagonism seen in Archilochus.

39. Thus in Books 9–12 of the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus takes over the narration of the poem as he tells his story to his Phaeacian hosts, his voice cannot be distinguished from the voice of the Homeric narrator, so totalizing is the effect of the metrical context.

40. Bakhtin 1981.28, comments directly on this issue in his brief discussion of the attempt of Gogol in *Dead Souls* to blend the satiric novel with the romantic vision of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. See Emerson and Morson 1990.275–77.

41. Readers of Homer may object to Bakhtin's characterization of the oral-formulaic diction that comprises epic language. Indeed, from the perspective of the poets who developed and extended the oral style, as well as their audiences, the multiple dialects that comprise Homeric speech would not have been ossified but part of an evolving tradition that achieved an ever greater flexibility to complement its striking economy. It is not the perspective of the contemporary that Bakhtin seeks to elicit here, however, but that of later audiences for whom the language of Homer is no longer a work in progress but a cultural fossil based on subject matter from the absolutely remote heroic past whose practitioners are forbidden to improvise. For dialogism as a component of epic characterization, see Peradotto 1990, 1993 and Felson 1993, 1994.

Nevertheless, for Bakhtin, the contrast between epic and novel illustrates two styles of representation that are broadly valid, even if the true state of things is less than monolithic. Cf. Silk 2000a.106–07 (citing Silk 1987) for the dialectic between "the fixed and the free" in Homer. The presence of the "free" must unavoidably reduce the prominence of the "fixed," but it does not eliminate its central structuring power.

42. This is the situation that the parodic text addresses. It exposes what is treated as natural and universal in its target, and shows those aspects to have been idiosyncratic and contingent all along.

43. Contemporary *allusions* have been discovered, of course, most importantly in the Trojan War plays of Euripides that respond to the situation of Athens during the war with Sparta. Tragedy's overall political orientation has recently been a focus of study; see Cartledge 1997, Goldhill 1991, Winkler 1990, Vernant and Vidal-Naquet 1988, Rose 1992, and Meier 1993.

44. See Aristotle *Poetics* 1451b19–23 on innovation in tragic plots. The *Persians* (480) is unusual in that it presents a contemporary historical event, the battle of Salamis. It may be that the particular significance of the events dramatized caused some writers to overcome the conventions of plot choice. It may also be that the date is significant in another way as well. If we compare the Aeschylus with Phrynichus's *Sack of Miletus* (494), we may be looking at the general

situation in early Attic tragedy, before conventions of plot were firmly in place. Whatever the case, Aeschylus's *Persians* is extraordinary in providing a *direct* link between the distanced world of epic and tragedy and the contemporary. Aristophanes has his Aeschylus argue a very similar point at *Frogs* 1025–27.

45. This type of word is extremely common in Greek. Many other word shapes that cannot be easily accommodated into iambic trimeters occur frequently as well. Lyric meters allow greater flexibility in terms of metrical patterns, but these apparently lacked the associations with everyday speech that Aristotle noted were characteristic of the iambic trimeter.

46. Cf. Silk 2000a.211. Neil 1901.211 states that comic trimeters are so frequently resolved that the absence of resolution is itself an indication of tragic parody. See, however, Stevens 1976 for the presence of colloquial expressions in Euripides. Sommerstein 2002 presents a fascinating compilation and analysis of comic language in the *Oresteia*, with intriguing suggestions on the directions such analyses might take. For Euripides, Devine and Stephens 1984 connect the greater frequency of resolution, as well as the reduced constraint on violations of Porson's bridge, to Euripides' greater inclusion of colloquial language. These formal features may well be indications of Euripides' attempt to reconfigure tragedy in such a way as to maximize its contact with the present. Bowie 1993 argues that Aristophanes, at any rate, may have seen it that way. His reading of *Thesmophoriazusae* sees Aristophanes' treatment of tragedy as a response to Euripidean poaching of comic motifs. See Silk 2000a.416–17.

47. For the concept of "speech genres," see Bakhtin 1986, also Emerson and Morson 1990.290–94.

48. Aristotle *Poetics* 1449a20–21: ἀπεσεμνύνθη. Cf. Strepsiades' description of the tragically-inflected cloudspeak (*Clouds* 364): ὡς ἱερὸν καὶ σεμνὸν καὶ τερατῶδες ("How holy, dignified, and marvelous!").

49. Aristophanes *Acharnians* 413–70. He is also singled out for bringing "cripples" on stage (*Acharnians* 411), a phenomenon with similar visual implications.

50. In *Acharnians*, a visit to the studio of Euripides shows him to have a supply of many ragged costumes that are catalogued for the audience until Euripides realizes that Dikaiopolis is determined to obtain the "rags" of Telephus (429). The ambivalence of the beggar had long been a prominent motif in the Greek folk tradition that imagined that beggars were under the protection of Zeus and that the gods themselves occasionally traveled incognito to test the hospitality of mortals. For the gods disguised as beggars, see *Odyssey* 9.269–71 and Callimachus *Hecale*; also Gantz 1993. *Odyssey* 18.4–105 exploits the ambiguity by representing a beggar derisively nicknamed Iros, after Iris, the divine messenger.

51. Cf. Bakhtin 1981.13, where the genealogical image is continued.

52. Although Bakhtin often uses the term polyphony without comment to describe the juxtaposition of voices within the novel, it is clear that he sees

the word as a metaphor with only limited application to music; see Bakhtin 1984.22.

53. Bakhtin 1984.91. Bakhtin was not the only critic to notice this aspect of Dostoevsky's style, but he differed greatly from Soviet-era critics such as Otto Kaus, who, according to Bakhtin's summary, saw Dostoevsky's innovations as a product of the rise of capitalism, which destroyed social and religious barriers that had previously separated discourses from one another; see Bakhtin 1984.19–20. For Bakhtin, the novel's prehistory extended far beyond the development of capitalism, which could, therefore, have only a limited explanatory role.

54. Bakhtin 1981.21. See also Bakhtin 1984.108: "Their starting point for understanding, evaluating and shaping reality, is the living *present*, often even the very day" (emphasis in original).

55. Bakhtin 1981.23. See also p. 35: "Laughter destroyed epic distance; it began to investigate man freely and familiarly, to turn him inside out, expose the disparity between his surface and his center, between his potential and his reality."

56. Bakhtin 1981.67, 1984.193. See also Emerson and Morson 1990.152.

57. I am aware that centrifugal effects are not described as a "force" in classical physics, but are instead described in terms of inertia. Bakhtin's metaphorical application of the term is, therefore, valid only at the rhetorical level.

58. Emerson and Morson 1990.140. See also Fish 1994 on the problems accompanying appeals to a "common" center.

59. Bakhtin 1981.48 and Kristeva 1980.66.

60. In a famous passage from *Acharnians* (502–08), performed at the Lenaia of 425, the main character Dikaiopolis speaks in the name of the comedy to justify his unrestrained speech on the basis of the fact that, in contrast to the audience at the City Dionysia, that of the Lenaia was purely Athenian. A particularly impressive part of the City Dionysia in Aristophanes' time was the arrival of the allied states with their contributions to the Delian League. These contributions were displayed before the spectators in the Theater of Dionysus itself. On the ceremony and on the relationship between free speech and imperial power, see Goldhill 1991.101–03.

61. Some have speculated that the number was reduced to three during the Peloponnesian War, to shorten the festival. For a recent skeptical discussion, see MacDowell 1995.8–9.

62. They did not have financial responsibility, however. This burden, known as *choregeia*, was allotted to individual wealthy citizens and metics by the archon. For a discussion of the ancient sources relating to this office, see Slater and Csapo 1995.139–57. Producing a play was, nevertheless, more than a literary, or even a dramatic, enterprise, it was a complex set of logistical problems. It is small wonder, then, that the job was not always undertaken alone. Aristophanes was aided by Callistratus both early in his career and in a play as late as *Frogs*

(405 B.C.E.). For an extensive discussion of this phenomenon and other relevant bibliography, see Halliwell 1980, Slater 1989, and Slater 2002.252, 273.

63. If the number of plays sponsored for each festival was truly reduced from five to three during the Peloponnesian War, this scarcity would have heightened the competition among ambitious authors.

64. The section of *Clouds* in which this passage occurs is the *parabasis*, a type of scene characterized by the chorus, or the chorus-leader, speaking in the name of the poet. The *parabasis* of *Clouds*, as we have it, was rewritten for re-production. For a discussion of the relationship between *Clouds*, *Wasps*, and Aristophanes' "vulgar" rivals, see Chapter 3.

65. A proverb preserved by Hesychius refers to five judges and specifically mentions Athens. It is therefore possible that only five of the ten judges actually cast votes. The testimonia are collected in Slater and Csapo 1995.157–65. See also MacDowell 1995.11–12.

66. Slater 2002.10 describes how the ambivalence of the term *didaskalos*, "teacher," as applied to the poet, makes possible an easy rhetorical move from chorus-teacher to one capable of instructing the audience about things of concern to the city.

67. The literature on the connection between Old Comedy and the polis is substantial. See Carrière 1979, Rösler 1986, Redfield 1990, Henderson 1990, the authors of the essays in the excellent collection of Sommerstein et al. 1993, Bowie 1993, Konstan 1995, Lada-Richards 1999, Dobrov 1995b, 2001, and Slater 2002 for different aspects of this important relationship.

68. Despite Dikaiopolis' claim about the presence of foreigners in the audience at the City Dionysia, the plays of Aristophanes produced there (*Clouds*, *Peace*, *Birds*, *Thesmophoriazusae*) show much the same willingness to innovate and imagine situations incompatible with the norms of everyday life as do the Lenaia plays (*Acharnians*, *Knights*, *Wasps*, *Lysistrata*, *Frogs*).

69. Indeed, the analogy with Bakhtin's understanding of carnivalized literature and of the novel offers us the possibility that Old Comedy, too, might best be described as the anti-genre, the type of writing that exposes the inflexibility of other genres while escaping generic classification itself.

70. Except in the case of Aristophanes, for whom we have complete plays, other Old Comedies are extremely difficult to reconstruct with certainty. Fragments are limited to short citations, usually quoted out of context. These are collected in the monumental work of Kassel and Austin 1983–. The study of comic fragments can yield interesting results, however. See the essays in Dobrov 1995a, Harvey and Wilkins 2000, and Platter 1996. A major translation project under the general editorship of Jeffery Rusten promises to do much to stimulate research in this area.

71. These are studied by Sifakis 1971.

72. Bakhtin coins (1986) the term "speech genres" to describe these nonliterary elements.

73. Cf. Bakhtin 1981.262 on the novel: "The style of a novel is to be found in the combination of its styles, the language of a novel is the system of its 'languages.'" See also in the same essay, p. 366: "The novel . . . denies the absolutism of a single and unitary language—that is, that refuses to acknowledge its own language as the sole verbal and semantic center of the ideological world."

74. See Slater 2002.7–14 on Old Comedy's consciousness of its own constructedness as part of its metatheatrical architecture, which he connects with Aristophanes' offhanded use of the technical vocabulary of poetry and music. Thus there is no novelty in Aristophanes beyond the (frequent) assertion of novelty; everything is already there, supplying Old Comedy with its usual means to expose the claims of other, less self-conscious genres and to renovate them, while remaining paradoxically dependent on them.

75. The image is not limited to Cratinus. Aristophanes, too, makes use of it in the rewritten *parabasis* of *Clouds* to describe his practice of entrusting the production of his early plays to another by comparing himself to an unwed mother who gives up her "child," Aristophanes' first play *Banqueters*, to another "girl" to raise (530–31). Note, however, the contrast between Cratinus's domestic model of composition, which is predicated on the "legitimacy" of comic offspring, and Aristophanes' version, in which sexual and textual relations are clearly illicit.

76. For a detailed account of the *parabasis* and its complexity, see Hubbard 1991. The special authority often given to the positions expressed in the *parabasis*, particularly those of Aristophanes' *Clouds* and *Wasps*, is discussed at length in Chapter 3.

77. The word *parabasis* itself is not a part of Old Comedy's technical vocabulary.

78. Cf., for example, *Acharnians* 500. Bakhtin does not discuss Old Comedy. Even references to Aristophanes are rare. His name appears most frequently in discussions of carnival folk culture, which, as Bakhtin rightly comments, is reflected but dimly in Aristophanes' highly literate comedies. For a more comprehensive discussion, see Platter 1993, Platter 2001, and Edwards 1993.

79. See von Möllendorff 1995.33–60. See also Bakhtin 1986.112: "When there is a deliberate . . . multiplicity of styles, there are always dialogic relations among the styles."

80. For a fundamental reorientation of the debate on Aristophanic *spoudogeloion*, see Silk 2000a.301–49.

81. This thesis will demand of readers some tolerance for openendedness and complexity. We need not be eager to reduce complexity simply to justify a preexistent opinion about what plays were *about*. I cannot do better than Silk 2000a, who laconically observes: "Any work is or means whatever its relationships prompt it to be or mean." He thus sketches the field for a style of interpretation that is descriptive at the level of textual interaction (critical valuations appear at another level of analysis): "Interpretations (subtle or otherwise) should be rejected as and if incompatible with these relationships—not on the

basis of some extra-interpretative diagnosis of a work's level" (p. 3, n. 4; cf. pp. 318–20).

82. For suggestive remarks concerning phallic displays, laughter, and aggression among primates, see Burkert 1983.22–29 and 58–60, Burkert 1979. 39–42.

83. Also Pickard-Cambridge 1962.132–62, Burkert 1985.103–05. For a collection of the primary sources with commentary, see Slater and Csapo 1995.89–101.

84. Burkert 1985.287; Burkert 1985.103–05 offers a brief survey of the numerous related spectacles. As part of the *gephurismos*, a prostitute traditionally stood at the bridge, apparently leading the vulgarity. See Hesychius s.v. *gephuris*. The custom is perhaps alluded to at *Wasps* 1363.

85. Scaife 1992 discusses the erotic possibilities in the symposiastic game of *kottabos*. Most famous, of course, is the symposium recounted in Plato's work of the same name. It lacks much of the erotic revelry that characterized many gatherings (for example, the symposium whose aftermath we see at the end of Aristophanes' *Wasps*). Nevertheless, the decision of the revelers to give speeches in praise of Eros maintains the status quo in its own way and prefigures the explicitly erotic seduction narrative of Alcibiades (214e9–22b7).

86. It also formed the basis for a second Aristophanic play of the same name (date unknown). For the importance of such rituals to comedy, see Bowie 1993.

87. Both Hipponax and Archilochus are, in fact, quoted in Aristophanes. Hipponax is alluded to at *Lysistrata* 360–61, where his violent feud with the sculptor Boupalus is mentioned; he is named at *Frogs* 961. For Archilochus, see below.

88. Schol. Dionysus Thrax (= K.-A. T11 s.v. Susario). This identification is obviously erroneous, unless a different Susarion is intended. Moreover, despite the ancient predilection for establishing founders for important institutions and practices, the origins of iambic poetry are probably to be seen in the anonymous folk tradition and date from a very early period, long before written records existed.

89. Rosen 1988.9–35. Bowie 2002 offers a skeptical critique. See Henderson 1991.17–23 for the striking similarity between the two poets and Aristophanes. The effects are often subtle, and the borders between obscenity and abuse fluid. At *Knights* 365, the second line quoted above, κύβδα, the word translated as "headfirst," appears also at Archilochus 32 to describe the position of a prostitute as she "labors" at fellatio. Thus the passage from *Knights* is redolent of iambic poetry in its orientation, but also refashions the vocabulary of obscenity to heighten Paphlagon's abusive effects.

90. This quarrel is mentioned first by Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians* and receives its fullest expression in *Knights*, where Cleon is represented as a Paphlagonian slave who has wormed his way into the good graces of the master of the house, old Demos. West 1974 argues that the name Lycambes means something

like "wolf-dancer" and may have been the name given to a traditional figure of folk entertainment. See also Van Sickle 1975 and Miller 1994.9–36.

91. In Chapter 4, I discuss in detail one of these dialogic interactions, the effect of Archilochus frag. 5 on the rhetorical construction of *Peace*. In this passage, the Archilochus fragment is quoted by the son of Cleonymos, a man made notorious by Aristophanes as a "shield-thrower." Here iambic poetry does double duty, both as the peaceful opposition to "warlike" Homeric poetry and as the preferred genre of unmanly skulkers like Cleonymos and his son. For Cleonymos as a favorite target of Aristophanes, see Chapter 3.

92. I have in mind here the appearance first of Iris and Prometheus, then of the divine embassy in *Birds* (1199–1259, 1494–1693) and the Heracles motif in *Frogs* (35–163 and passim). I distinguish between scenes whose resonance with tragedy is clear and those where the appearance of a mythological figure is less specifically literary, as far as we know. Thus it is not appropriate to discuss tragic parodies like Dikaiopolis' reprisal of Euripides' *Telephus* here, nor the use Aristophanes makes of it in *Thesmophoriazusae*. The same goes for the numerous other scenes derived from tragedy, e.g., the various tragic disguises Euripides assumes in his attempt to rescue his relative in *Thesmophoriazusae* and the impressively vulgar take on Euripides' version of Perseus and Bellerophon that serves as the opening scene in *Peace*.

93. *Clouds* 522 and passim. See Chapter 3 for a discussion of Aristophanes' comic "wisdom."

94. Nor those of the bowels, as the chorus makes clear in the lines that follow (790–92):

> And if some Patrocleides among you happens to feel he needs to crap, he wouldn't
> Have had to . . . exude into his clothes; he'd have upped and flown off,
> Let off a fart, taken a deep breath and flown back here again.
> (trans. Sommerstein 1987)

95. See Chapter 5 for an elaboration of this point, taking Aristophanes' use of Euripides' play *Telephus* as a test case.

96. *Frogs* 303–04. Aristophanes was not the only writer to use this joke, as we can see from Strattis frags. 1 and 63 K.-A., as well as Sannyrion frag. 8 K.-A. Aristophanes likes to remind us of the great gap that separated him from his rivals. It is just possible that he exaggerates. See Halliwell 1989 for a model of comic competition that assumes a much greater degree of cooperation. Chapter 3 also takes up Aristophanes' self-assessment as we encounter it in *Wasps*.

97. The pedagogical function of comedy is often commented upon directly, e.g., at *Acharnians* 635–40, where the chorus describes the efficacy of Aristophanic comedy at inoculating the demos against cheap flattery.

98. See also Pelling 2000.139, who sees a generic connection in the dialectic between comic limitation and its tendency to refuse to be limited. The claims

put forth in Aristophanic *parabases* might seem to offer a powerful objection to this position; indeed, the traditional focus of scholars on political interpretations of Aristophanes can probably be traced to the influence of the *parabasis* in structuring the response to Aristophanic comedy. Yet the claims of the *parabasis*, while important, as Hubbard 1991 emphasizes, are no interpretative key to the work of Aristophanes. In the polyglot world of Old Comedy, the words of the actor impersonating a cloud or a wasp impersonating the author of a play have no particular claim to a privileged status and are subject to the same destabilizing influences encountered by other comic trajectories. For an application of this principle to the *parabases* of *Clouds* and *Wasps*, see Chapter 3.

99. See Konstan 1995.4–7 for a justification of the symptomatic reading of such representational cruxes, which he regards as a product of the texts' conflicted "ideological labor." My reading complements that of Konstan, emphasizing instead the degree to which ideological conflict itself can be co-opted by the savvy writer and reintroduced into the cultural mix at a higher level of intentionality; see also Goldhill 1991.174.

100. Cf. Goldhill 1991.179–82, 195–96; Zeitlin 1981.183; Pelling 2000.147–48. Many writers focus upon the specific material conditions of Athenian life as they are revealed in Aristophanes. This can be done from a Bakhtinian perspective, as Bernard-Donals 1994 argues, especially on the basis of works from the 1920s, which, according to some, were written by Bakhtin. I shall not attempt it, however. Sympathetic to the arguments of Bernard-Donals (esp. pp. 179–98), I nevertheless agree with Bakhtin 1986 that language itself is the material condition par excellence and am reluctant to assert the priority of other aspects of materiality above it.

101. See also Hesk 2001.227–61 for a model of Aristophanic comedy as an open medium with potential appeal to diverse groups, based on their divergent understandings of the plays.

102. It is of a qualitatively different sort than the criticism Aristophanes levels at others. See Kaimio and Nykopp 1997.

103. Zeitlin 1981.175–76, however, emphasizes the connection *between* the two ideas in Aristophanes' decision to force his Euripidean character to face the consequences of his dramatic innovations by being compelled to face the exigencies of everyday life.

104. Bakhtin 1968.34. See also Emerson and Morson 1990.95–96. For the *alazon*, "braggart," as a recognized comic type, see Hubbard 1991.2–8.

105. Cf. Bernard-Donals 1994.10–11 for a summary of Medvedev's critique of formalism along similar lines. See also Lada-Richards 1999.10–11.

1. Dikaiopolis on Modern Art

1. Bakhuyzen 1877, Hope 1905, Murray 1891, Handley and Rea 1957, Preiser 2000, and Dobrov 2001.33–53.

2. Telephus was the son of Heracles and king of the Mysians in Asia Minor,

where the first Achaian expedition against Troy mistakenly landed. The king led out his troops to face the invading Greeks and was wounded in the foot by the spear of Achilles. The Greeks returned home, but the wound of Telephus did not heal. He learned through an oracle that it could only be cured by the man who inflicted it. Telephus travels to Argos in the guise of a beggar and manages to gain access to the palace of Agamemnon. He engages the Greeks in conversation and is eventually discovered for who he is. He seizes the infant Orestes and compels the Greeks to hear him speak. He is found to be a Greek also and is cured by the rust from the spear of Achilles. For the Telephus myth and its sources, see Gantz 1993.576–80 and Preiser 2000.41–63.

3. E.g., MacDowell 1983. The idea is also implicit in differently focused works like de Ste. Croix 1972; see also Heath 1987a.7–8. An illuminating retrospective of views is found in Reckford 1987.200–07. Silk 2000a.318–19 is good on the limits of political interpretation.

4. See Bakhtin 1986.112; also 1984.12, 266, 366–67. For a specific application of the principle to drama, see Bakhtin 1984.15.

5. This approach owes much to Dover's thorough discussion of the problem (1987.224–36). His analysis, however, is focused on "the style of Aristophanes" and is only secondarily interested in the interaction of intertextual elements. His careful classification, nevertheless, provides a model approach. See Silk 2000a.35–37 for a summary of linguistic shifts in Dikaiopolis' prologue. See also Silk 2000b.299–300.

6. Unless otherwise indicated, I follow the text of Hall and Geldart 1906. Translations, except where noted, are my own.

7. Dover 1987.231–32 gives the full list of repetitions and variations in these lines.

8. Slater 2002.43. Hubbard 1991.41 also emphasizes the close parallelism between the situation of the audience and that of Dikaiopolis.

9. The name refers to the pre-performance presentation in which the actors may have been introduced, perhaps with a summary of each play. See Slater and Csapo 1995.105, 9–10; Pickard-Cambridge 1988.67–68.

10. We might say the same for *Birds*, in which the significantly named Peisthetairos ("companion-persuader") and Euelpides ("hopeful") are not revealed until 644–45. Until this point, they are simply Athenian quietists seeking to escape the *polypragmosyne*, "meddlesomeness" of Athens. Thereafter, their ambitions, which culminate in the universal tyranny of Peisthetairos, become clearer.

11. Bowie 1988. The argument is based in part on the names Dikaiopolis and Eupolis, which have similar first elements (Dikaio-, "just" vs. Eu-, "well") and identical second (-polis, "city"). This proposal has not won wide assent, but recently Sidwell has defended it forcefully (1994). Dover 1993.3, n. 13 interprets Bowie's thesis as consistent with his own suggestion (1987.296) that Dikaiopolis "personifies the characteristic 'hero' of comedy." Olson 2002.180 is skeptical, and rightly emphasizes the lack of direct evidence in support of Bowie's argument.

12. Aristophanes' approach to character names and naming is varied. Most frequently, characters are named before the entrance of the chorus or shortly thereafter. But the issue is sometimes treated in other ways, as in *Thesmophoriazusae*, where the revelation that Euripides is the main character is strongly hinted at by the absurdly paradoxical language with which the actor (not addressed by name until line 77) conducts his conversation (5–18). For the record, I include the line number in each play at which the name of a major character is revealed: *Acharnians* 406 (Dikaiopolis); *Knights* 2 (Paphlagon), 1257 (Sausage-Seller as Agoracritus); *Clouds* 67 (Pheidippides), 134 (Strepsiades); *Wasps* 133 (Philocleon), 134 (Bdelycleon); *Peace* 190 (Trygaios); *Birds* 634 (Peisthetairos), 635 (Euelpides); *Lysistrata* 6 (Lysistrata); *Thesmophoriazusae* 77 (Euripides); *Ecclesiazusae* 124 (Praxagora); *Wealth* 336 (Chremylus). Slaves are occasionally identified by name early (e.g., *Wasps* 1 [Xanthias], but are otherwise distinguished by their actions as the "curtain" goes up (*Wasps*, *Peace*, *Frogs*, *Wealth*), a fact that adds a level of uncertainty to the beginning of *Thesmophoriazusae*, where the relative of Euripides begins with a complaint in the manner of a slave.

13. See note 46 to Introduction.

14. See Starkie 1909.7 for passages; also Taillardat 1965.153–55. The collocation also appears in Plato *Symposium* 218a in a passage that may be derived from *Acharnians*. Cf. Hermippus 47: δηχθεὶς αἴθωνι Κλέωνι vs. *Iliad* 4.485 et al.

15. *Clouds* 1013: γλῶτταν βαιάν which is promised to Pheidippides should he accept the tutelage of Right. See also Starkie 1909.8.

16. Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 1574, *Persians* 1023; Sophocles *Philoctetes* 845.

17. Dover 1987.225 notes that the appearance of the word in Democritus (B19) indicates that its poetic resonance has begun to decline.

18. Bakhtin 1986.88; cf. Kristeva 1980.65–66, 73.

19. An example of this type of reduction can be found in the *Essais* of Montaigne, where the dense, lapidary use of quotations (especially in the case of the longer ones) often obscures the presence of a narrative voice. See also Bakhtin 1986.82.

20. For an insistence on the distinction between the realm of writing that represents things simply *as they are* and writing that, artfully or not, produces "reality effects," see Kennedy 1993.

21. Audience competence will also play a role, as differing backgrounds and assumptions will produce differing dialogical relationships. Some of the permutations of this phenomenon are discussed in Chapter 2.

22. He is mentioned in an inscription of 440 (*IG* 2(2).2325.120). For testimonia and inscriptional evidence see frags. 562–64 K.-A. For testimonia on Alcaeus, see frags. 3–5 K.-A. See also Aristophanes frag. 375 K.-A. and Dover 1987.227–28.

23. Rosen 1988, Halliwell 1989, and Olson 2002.66.

24. See also Dübner 1969.2. Unless otherwise noted, all references to the scholia are from Dübner 1969. Athenaeus 229f. also quotes the verb in a fragment from a mime of Sophron.

25. No claim is made here regarding the historical accuracy of such charges, or even that they need refer to real antagonisms. See Halliwell 1989 for a model that comprehends both the fairly abundant evidence for close collaboration in the theater and the plethora of charges and countercharges regarding the lack of originality and poor quality of the work of fellow poets. For a discussion of "vulgar comedy" in the Aristophanic scheme of things, see Chapter 3.

26. It also defeated the first version of *Clouds* in 424. Cratinus is mentioned indirectly in Aristophanes' description of the reception of the original play: εἶτ᾽ ἀνεχώπουν ὑπ᾽ ἀνδρῶν φορτικῶν ἡττηθεὶς οὐκ ἄξιος ὤν, "I withdrew, unfairly beaten by vulgar men" (524–25).

27. *Satyrs* (424), *Delian Women* (424). One additional play, *Storm-Tossed Men* (425), was second to *Acharnians* in 425.

28. Frag. 308 K.-A.; Dübner 1969.2.

29. Cf. Alexis frag. 303b Arnott: ὀνόμασι . . . ψαμακοσίοις. The career of Alexis runs from the middle of the fourth century to the first quarter of the third. For complete testimonia and discussion, see Arnott 1996.

30. For similar strategies within an overall description of poetic control, see Bloom 1973.

31. Cf. *Knights* 119, 1214; *Clouds* 21. Speaking prosodically, it also requires an anapestic substitution for an iambic foot, thereby lowering the stylistic tone with the initial resolved longum. See also Olson 2002.66.

32. 1880.3. Dover 1987.228, on the basis of parallel formations in -δων, sees it as a neologism of the sort common among educated people, a hypothesis that is compatible with Merry's.

33. The most detailed examination of the fragments of Euripides' play is now Preiser 2000. Van Leeuwen 1901.8, Rennie 1909.86, and Rogers 1910.3 view it as a comic coinage. Starkie 1909.9 equivocates. In any case, the line interacts vividly with 8, as the significance of ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι, a quotation from *Telephus* (frag. 720 N2), is heightened by the anaphora of ἄξιον. See Olson 2002.66.

34. Murray 1891.40, Hope 1905.29, van Leeuwen 1901.8. The scholion does not add anything here; its observation that κέαρ is a substitution for καρδία is simply a deduction from the text. καρδία itself is not simply a prosaic term. κέαρ, however, is more limited, appearing only in serious poetry and comic parody and paratragedy; see Olson 2002.66. Eupolis (frag. 90 K.-A.) wrote ἀλγύνει κέαρ, imitating Euripides *Medea* 394–97 and who knows what else, but none of these texts are obviously invoked here. The metrical position of the *Acharnians* quotation is also different, whereas Eupolis' imitation and the words from *Medea* occupy homologous metrical positions.

35. For a summary of early views, see Starkie 1909.241–43.

36. Carawan 1990. Pelling 2000.34, 130 offers useful cautions about the degree of literalness to expect from comic "history."

37. This interpretation is also supported by the lines that follow, which sug-

gest a contrast between pleasurable comedy and painful tragedy: αὖ τραγῳδικόν (9), which is paired with ὠδυνήθην, suggests a formal contrast with ἐγανώθην. If the parallel is sound, it would suggest that Cleon's discomfiture represented the missing fourth element, comedy. See also Taillardat 1965.415, n. 2, who argues for γάνυμαι as a verb specifically connoting aesthetic enjoyment.

38. Cf. *Acharnians* 377–82, 502–03. See also van Leeuwen 1901.9, Reckford 1987.512, n. 13, and Hubbard 1991.41–42, n. 2. For a detailed examination of the relationship between Cleon and Aristophanes, see Olson 2002.xl–lii and Sommerstein 1980.158.

39. See also the threat of Demos at *Knights* 1148 to make Cleon vomit up his ill-gotten gains; cf. Neil 1901.62, and 153 on both passages.

40. Lübke's view is most persuasive to me. The proclivity of the scholiasts to write history by taking literally scenes from comedy is well known (Lefkowitz 1981.105–16). Further, the fact that no trial is mentioned in the surviving fragments of *Babylonians* is hardly compelling evidence, since scarcely more than twenty lines are extant. After all, none of them refer to Cleon either, yet it seems beyond question that he appeared in the play.

41. I shall return to the issue of tragic dignity after the Euripidean subtext of the prologue has been discussed.

42. Cf. Eupolis frag. 448 K.-A. for ἐμίας, "vomiter," used to describe a bad speaker and *Knights* 1288. See also Taillardat 1965.415–16 and Olson 2002.67. Aristophanes' tendency to describe political corruption in terms of eating and drinking makes vomiting a particularly appropriate "comeuppance."

43. Bakhtin 1968, Emerson and Morson 1990, Holquist 1990.

44. It thus offers a point of contrast with the essentially apolitical and invariable cycle of birth, death, and decay.

45. On the level of its specific context in line 6, vomiting continues the pattern of shifting levels of diction discussed above. Its effect is to lower further the stylistic tone of Dikaiopolis' tragically inflected remarks and to deflate thoroughly their serious pretensions.

46. Cf. 587, where the uncompounded form ἐμεῖν is used as a synonym.

47. The verb appears at *Iliad* 13.493 and 20.405. It appears three times in tragedy, however, all in lyric passages (Aeschylus *Eumenides* 970, Euripides *Cyclops* 504, *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 1239). Cf. Hope 1905.18.

48. Euripides frag. 720 N2. For a full discussion of the fragment, see Preiser 2000.310–15. See also Olson 2002.68.

49. It is likely that both paratragic and clearly parodic passages in Old Comedy would have been accompanied by a delivery designed to exaggerate and emphasize their tragic cast. Although the presence of utterly incompetent viewers who do not realize that *anything* is going on is certainly possible, such viewers cannot have been very numerous. For native speakers, the identification of shifts in tone is not a complex business—such humor is, after all, a staple of animated cartoons—and thus can be assumed to have been within the capability of most

spectators on the basis of acting style alone, whether or not they were conscious of the subtle and not-so-subtle prosodic features of the lines. Dover 1987.229 suggests the possibility that the expression had passed into general use. If this could be demonstrated, it would raise a new and fascinating problem: how best to interpret a literary quotation that has begun to pass into common speech (i.e., it no longer "feels" literary) in the context of a play that highlights (for many audience members, anyway) the very original from which it derives. The problem would require subtle analysis. It is hard to believe that audience reaction would ever have been homogeneous in such a circumstance, however.

50. The allegorical subtext of *Acharnians* is further undermined by the fact that, by the end of the play, it is Lamachos who embodies the role of Telephus when he returns from battle wounded in the foot by a vine-prop (Foley 1988.38–39).

51. At the same time, the ease with which Dikaiopolis is able to move from one to the other is indicative of tragedy's psychogogic power. Foley 1988.47 notes the sense in which *Acharnians* exposes "tragedy's dependence on pathos and theatrical illusion."

52. Cf. the praise of Aristophanes in the *parabasis*, lines 633–58. *Wasps* 1029–35 emphasizes Aristophanes' heroic stature, casting him as a Heracles battling against monstrous beasts. See Chapter 3, however, for the complex heteroglossia of which the representation is a part.

53. This aspect of the play is again emphasized in the scene with Euripides, where Telephus's costume is catalogued in excruciating detail (430–78). The bathos of this treatment is further intensified by the plethora of diminutives that accompany it. For tragedy as the equivalent of epic in a Bakhtinian sense, see Platter 2001.

54. Olson 2002.69. See also *Acharnians* 139–40 and *Thesmophoriazusae* 170. For the frigidity of Theognis, see Kaimio and Nykopp 1997.

55. Dikaiopolis' appreciation of Aeschylus also includes rhythmic emulation, as comic anapests in the first metron give way to unresolved iambs in the second and third.

56. Merry 1880.4. Rennie 1909.89 characterizes the phrase as a survival of the Homeric substantival article. This is not relevant from a generic point of view, however, as the phrase could not begin a dactylic hexameter line, and thus could not occupy the same emphatic position it occupies in Dikaiopolis' speech. See also Olson 2002.69, 81–82.

57. Dover 1987.230–31 sees the expression as colloquial and an example of Euripides' inclusion of common speech in his tragedies. See also Silk 1993.489 for Euripides as the great democratizer of tragic language.

58. So, too, the synonymous πῶς οἴει; see Stevens 1976.39 for passages and discussion.

59. The word order is not *metri causa*, as the line can be easily rearranged to lessen the hyperbaton without changing a single letter.

60. Rennie 1909.90, Merry 1880.4. For Moschos and Dexitheus, see Olson 2002.69–70, who also discusses the possible contamination of the line.

61. Dübner 1969.2. See also Rennie 1909.91 and Merry 1880.4.

62. The recognition that speaking names have literal or ironic significance is common in Plato, but is present as early as the Outis scene of the *Odyssey*. It is tempting to wonder if grammatical distortions of the ἐπὶ Μόσχῳ variety, i.e., unusual grammatical formations used to highlight etymological figures, were at all common.

63. Dexitheus, too, has associations with the good old days. The "Boeotian tune" was attributed to Terpander (Dübner 1969.2) and thus is appropriate for a musician of whom the rustic Dikaiopolis would approve (Starkie 1909.12).

64. See Rennie 1909.90 and von Leutsch and Schneidewin 1958.333, 1961.2.86.

65. Osborne and Byrne 1994 count seventy-one appearances of the name in Attica.

66. It is, of course, easier to posit corruption of the unique Aristophanic line rather than suggest that it is Aristophanes who borrows here. Yet the former is really no more plausible. The scholiast's statement carries no particular weight and is probably a desperate inference from the text.

67. Starkie 1909.12. For parallels, cf. *Clouds* 967: Παλλάδα περσέπολιν and *Acharnians* 1093: φίλταθ' Ἁρμοδίου. *Acharnians* 863 may represent a similar case. For ποτέ in the beginning of a narrative poem, see Bacchylides 16.1. For an unambiguous reference to popular song, cf. Cratinus frag. 254 K-A.: "singing the song of Cleitagora to the tune of 'Admetus.'"

68. Thus to return to the Bakhtinian classification proposed above, the line is a neutral carrier of lexical meaning, full of echoes left by previous users, and appropriated by Aristophanes—all at the same time. This complex of competing significations allows the text to raise multiple interpretative possibilities that cannot be resolved at the level of the individual spectator, or reader, and points to the way in which Aristophanic comedy provides a hothouse atmosphere for cultural responses without exerting (or being able to exert) complete control over them.

69. Miller 1945b.76. See Dover 1987.230–31 for useful methodological remarks regarding the identification of words used to describe physical conditions as ipso facto medical in the technical sense.

70. "I groan, gape, stretch, fart, I'm confused, I write, pluck my hair, calculate."

71. Olson 2002.70 sees in διεστράφην a reference to torture. If he is correct, the word corroborates the hyperbolic tone of ἀπέθανον.

72. Dover 1987.232. Chairis also appears at *Peace* 951 and *Birds* 858, 864–66. Taplin (1993.105–06) suggests that references to Chairis elsewhere in comedy are elaborate metatheatrical events at which Chairis is to be imagined as the official *auletes* who is a perfectly competent player but an easy target for abuse.

If Chairis were imagined to be present on stage for *Acharnians*, the ambiguities of Dikaiopolis' reminiscence would further exploit the comic possibilities of this phenomenon. Cf. Dunbar 1995.508. Pherecrates frag. 6 K.-A. also portrays Chairis as a bad player, but is open to the same ironic interpretation as the references in Aristophanes.

The language used to describe Chairis is sexually loaded as well. Although παρακύπτειν, "stoop sideways," has no obvious sexual use, κύπτειν, "stoop," suggests preparation to be penetrated sexually or to perform fellatio (Henderson 1991.179–80 and 183). Likewise, ὄρθιον, "straight," commonly describes an erect penis (Henderson 1991.112)—perhaps even more so when the person concerned is carrying a flute (giving a whole new sense to the preposition ἐπί).

73. Bergson 1940.22–23: "Les attitudes, gestes et mouvements du corps humain sont risibles dans l'exacte mesure où ce corps nous fait penser à une simple mécanique."

74. For a discussion of the phenomenon, see the Introduction and Platter 2001.54–57.

75. Emerson and Morson 1990.36 describe "unfinalizability" (*nezavershennost'*) as Bakhtin's shorthand for "his conviction that the world is not only a messy place, but is also an open place."

2. The Failed Programs of *Clouds*

1. The conflict between generations as a literary theme in Greek is, of course, at least as old as Hesiod's succession myth in the *Theogony*, a parallel exploited later in the play (904b–06). Cf. Aeschylus's *Eumenides* 149–52 and passim. See also Strauss 1993.13–17. For a summary of *Banqueters*, together with numerous parallels with *Clouds*, see Norwood 1963.276–87.

2. The literature on the subject is vast. For an overview, see Dover 1968. xxxii–lvii and Strauss 1966.

3. 575–94, 1303–20 (hinted at darkly at 1113–14).

4. I take it as axiomatic that lines like *Clouds* 364 ("Oh Earth, what a voice, how holy and august and strange") cannot be taken at face value when uttered by Strepsiades. Whatever impresses *him* and meets *his* approval is *ipso facto* ludicrous. This fact is illustrated by his brilliant conjunction of reverence and scatology to describe his fear of the Clouds at 293–94: καὶ σέβομαί γ', ὦ πολυτίμητοι, καὶ βούλομαι ἀνταποπαρδεῖν / πρὸς τὰς βροντάς "And I revere you, oh greatly honored ones, and I want to fart in reply to the thunder").

5. Thirty-six appearances in Osborne and Byrne 1994.

6. For the family, see Herodotus 6.125–31 and Isocrates 16.25. Bowie 1993.103 sees Strepsiades' marriage as modeled on the situation of the ephebe, who moves from the periphery to the "very heart of Athenian political life."

7. For the differing horizons of expectation that could affect the perception of a comedy, see Lada-Richards 1999.11.

8. Megacles' position as a part of the audience, then, is precisely the same as

that of Socrates, at least according to Aelian (*Varia Historia* 2.13), who reports the story that Socrates dispelled the confusion of the audience over this strange character on stage by standing up during the performance. By so doing, he brought upon himself the full weight of comic ridicule but, unlike Megacles, preserved his uniqueness and did not allow himself to be reduced to the caricature of a typical sophist. This view of Socrates' behavior as an attempt to control, if only in a limited way, his comic representation is supported by Dover's comment that Socrates stood up "to imply 'Do I look like the sort of man who's playing the fool on stage?'" (1968.xxxiii; that is, the quote is from p. xxxiii, note 1).

9. It may also provoke indignation, as implied by *Acharnians* 377–83, 502–03, and 630–31, references to the infamous quarrel between Cleon and Aristophanes over the representation of Cleon in Aristophanes' *Babylonians* (426 B.C.E.). See Slater and Csapo 1995.166–71, Olson 2002.xl–lii. Such indignation is nevertheless culturally inappropriate. See Halliwell 1991 on the expectation that citizens should be able to take a joke.

10. Cf. *Wasps* 438 for a similar dramatic situation. Philocleon prays to the chthonic hero Kekrops who has the lower body of a snake (τὰ πρὸς πόδα). Instead of saying "Kekrops, a snake (δράκων) about the feet" (MacDowell 1971.194), he alters the expression to read "Kekrops, Drakon-tidean about the feet," in order to mock one or more of the Drakontides in the audience (for possible identifications, see MacDowell 1971.153).

11. For a similar double movement, see Chapter 3, which analyzes Aristophanes' "rejection" of *Clouds*-style comedy.

12. βαρυαχέος, 277; ἀρδομέναν, 282; ἀθανάτας, 289; γᾶν, 300.

13. Dover 1968.138. See also Silk 1980.108–09 and Silk 2000a.271.

14. *Clouds* 41b, which parodies of the opening lines of Euripides' *Medea*, for example.

15. "Reduced laughter" is Bakhtin's term, which he contrasts with the laughter of carnival, whose attachment to the "material bodily principle" in the form of food, sex, excretion, and related ideas is direct and unmediated. As Bakhtin himself writes, "carnival does not know footlights" (1968.7). "Reduced laughter," by contrast, characterizes much literature. The material bodily principle is attenuated but "continues to determine the structure of the image" (Bakhtin 1981.164; cf. Emerson and Morson 1990.443–44. 463–65). So here in the *Clouds parodos*, the mannerism of the Clouds' diction contributes incrementally to their overall comic effect despite the lack of a sustained comic focus. Further, this phenomenon is extremely common in Aristophanes and supplies much of the "background radiation" that is experienced but not consciously perceived.

16. See also κλόνος (387) for Strepsiades' use of a poetic word to describe the rumbling of his stomach after overindulgence at the Panathenaia. Cf. Dover 1968.151 (qualified implicitly by Dover 1968.103 s.v. ἴππερον) for κλόνος as a technical medical term.

17. The quotation of tragedy in Aristophanes is frequently double-voiced.

In this passage, Strepsiades quotes Euripides, apparently without animus. Later in the play, however, it will be the presumed immorality of the same playwright that precipitates the burning of the *phrontisterion*, "thinking place," by Strepsiades, after Pheidippides has sung with apparent relish a song from Euripides concerning the incestuous brother and sister, Phrixus and Helle (1371–72).

Similarly, *Clouds* 1415: κλάουσι παῖδες, πατέρα δ' οὐ κλάειν δοκεῖς; "Children weep—ought not fathers?" is a parody of Euripides *Alcestis* 691, where Pheres justifies his unwillingness to die in place of his son Admetus: χαίρεις ὁρῶν φῶς· πατέρα δ' οὐ χαίρειν δοκεῖς; "You rejoice to look upon the son—don't you think your father does?" Pheidippides bullies his father into accepting the proposition that the relationship between father and son should be radically altered. In order to do so, he appeals to Euripides, an author who, especially in the light of the story of Phrixus and Helle, might seem to be the obvious authority for revolutionary, not to mention criminal, social programs. But the quotation he chooses is absolutely inappropriate for Pheidippides' needs—it is, in fact, a defense, never effectively rebutted in *Alcestis*, of the traditional relationship between child and parent. Thus to make his point, Pheidippides is forced to deform the Euripidean quotation, substituting for the traditional hierarchy of suffering, wherein parent punishes child, his own democratic proposal for a state of affairs in which children, too, get their licks in.

18. Dover 1968.234 notes that the words of the scholiast could also be understood to mean "in a satyr-play." For the dramatic tradition, see Dover 1968.225. The *Clouds* passage is discussed in greater detail in Platter 2001.61–63.

19. It is only amplified by the altercation between Strepsiades and Pheidippides that precedes the climactic burning of the *phrontisterion* (1353–1450). Euripides' "secular humanism," a concomitant of the Socratic way of life, is shown to bring about the destruction of "family values." Nevertheless, Strepsiades' rejection of Socrates-Euripides in the end does nothing to rehabilitate the tradition, and the criticism it receives from Socrates, Wrong, and Pheidippides is allowed to stand unchallenged.

20. The punishment is, of course, itself dialogized by the many comic elements of the story not directly relating to Strepsiades' experience of crime and punishment. The emergence of the Clouds as defenders of morality at the end of the play, for example, is itself comic, inasmuch as they represent novelty at every level (cf. 348), not tradition.

21. Cf. Dunbar 1995.646 for the effect of Doricisms in the Bird chorus. For a critical appraisal of the quality of the *parodos*, see Silk 1980 and, more recently, Silk 2000a.166–81, where the diction and dialect of the chorus are characterized as "advertising high pretension" (p. 171). Parker 1997.188 sees the song as "dignified" in its diction. She does not dismiss the possibility of parody, however, and suggests an association of the chorus' diction with the dithyramb, itself an object of ridicule earlier in the scene (333).

22. This effect is also heightened if, as many believe, the chorus was invisible to the audience during much of its opening song.

23. For details, see Dover 1968.137–38.

24. For the costume of the Cloud chorus, see Stone 1981.311–13. The full point of Strepsiades' remark that the chorus looks like mortal women (341, 344) is obscure, beyond the obvious possibility that they are assimilated to the gender of νεφέλαι. Nevertheless, the only other woman mentioned prominently in the play is the wife of Strepsiades, whom he also describes as σεμνή (48 vs. the similar characterization of the Clouds at 291, 293, and 364). In this way, the laughable depiction of the chorus is visible from their first entrance in the play. In addition to whatever else they may be, they are figured as women, whose profligacy and eroticism are notorious throughout comedy. Taaffe 1994.31–36 notes the presence of feminine concerns in the Clouds' speech. For the association of the chorus with liquidity and boundarylessness (ἀέναοι, 275; δροσεράν, 276; ὀμβροφόροι, 299), see Carson 1990.

25. Fisher 1984.91. On the ambivalent chorus, see also Köhnken 1980, Hubbard 1991.106–10 (especially p. 108), and Marianetti 1992.76–102. O'Regan 1992.52 notes the "downward slide" of the Clouds as a consequence of the bathetic physical description of their "mechanism" at 369–78; see also Chapman 1983.11. For "mechanism" as a comic trope, see Bergson 1940, Guidorizzi and Del Corno 1996.xi–xii.

26. For a reasonable appraisal of the testimonia regarding Prodicus, whose lifetime seems to have paralleled that of Socrates, see Nails 2002.254–56. Rankin 1983.49 suggests the possibility of an important intertext with Prodicus's *Horai* (quoted approvingly by Socrates in Xenophon *Memorabilia* 2.1.21–39). It is a shame that we do not know when Prodicus wrote it.

27. His importance to the Clouds is loudly championed only to be diminished immediately by comparison with Prodicus. This joke neatly captures Aristophanes' characteristic ambivalence. It clearly damns Socrates with faint praise on the rhetorical level. On the practical level, however, it cuts numerous ways, depending on the assessment of Prodicus, of whom we know little. If he is a relatively benign presence, the moral seriousness of the Clouds goes up (anticipating their later metamorphosis) and the stock of Socrates goes down. On the other hand, anyone who thinks he is a scoundrel will see Socrates as a second-rate scoundrel and the Clouds as amoral opportunists. It is difficult to imagine a performance that would not have audience members holding each of these otherwise incompatible views, and it seems likeliest that comic poets would write to win the approval of both.

28. The elevated tone assumed by the Clouds is perhaps only justified by the fact that their low-life associates are producers of copious speech and that their own inclination is to imitate whatever they see (cf. 348–55).

29. This aspect of the Cloud chorus' self-presentation is made more intense, at least for the cognoscenti, if we assume with Edmunds 1985, that the Clouds,

as Socratic deities in the play, are intended as a travesty of the *daimonion* of the historical Socrates. That only a small number of spectators could be expected to know about such matters is not a serious objection. The Platonic Socrates mentions the beliefs people typically attribute to those who are thought (erroneously, in this case) to investigate τὰ μετέωρα, "heavenly matters" (*Apology* 18b6-c1). For the attitude as an instinctive reflex, see *Apology* 23d4–7.

30. Dover 1968.139; cf. Sophocles *Antigone* 100–02. Silk 1980.107 sees the *Clouds parodos* as characterized by "Aristophanes' worst lyrical tendencies: triteness, inflation, and pervasive lack of point."

31. For the significance of such temporizing expressions on the part of the chorus, see Chapter 3.

32. Cf. Taillardat 1965.329–30, Guidorizzi and Del Corno 1996.233. See Olson 2002.237 for a review of Bergk's suggestion that Aristophanes here alludes to the embassy of Gorgias to Athens in 427. The dialogical relationship suggested would produce fascinating results if there were more evidence to sustain it. Nevertheless, if Gorgias is thought to be the primary referent here, Dikaiopolis' language is oddly imprecise.

33. Such linguistic relationships are never stable, however. Reappearances of λιπαρός subsequent to *Acharnians* expose the emptiness of Aristophanes' boasts to be above such behavior, even as characters using the word are nevertheless revealed to be empty flatterers.

34. In the same way, the use of λιπαρόν by the Bird chorus at *Birds* 826 marks them as naifs who needed Aristophanic reeducation before falling under the sway of Peisthetairos. See also O'Regan 1992.44–46 for the overall parodic content of the *parabasis*, including the setting of λιπαρός.

35. Silk 1980.108–09 would agree with Dover that the *parodos* shows no overt signs of parody or humor, and although he admits that there is a "comic context" that is dissonant with the elevated tone of the lyrics, he nevertheless feels that since "there is no specifiable incongruity *within* the lyrics themselves," the Clouds parodos constitutes less than successful serious poetry (emphasis Silk). Silk's overall project, however, focuses on other issues, and his target here is the tendency of scholars to accept and repeat without scrutiny statements about the "beautiful lyrics" of Aristophanes. He is, therefore, predisposed to take the Clouds' song at face value. Silk 2000a.170–71 restates the position, citing the earlier work. Allowance is nevertheless made for the song as presenting "an element of foil to the humorous goings-on around it." For the consequences of stylistic openness in Aristophanes' lyrics, see Turasiewicz 1985.5–6.

36. Segal 1969 argues that the true identity of the Clouds is indicated throughout the play. Bowie 1993.125 goes still further, identifying weather signs that should have told Strepsiades to expect "a stormy encounter with clouds."

37. Cf. Bakhtin 1984.6–7: "Dostoevsky's major heroes are, by the very nature of his creative design, *not only objects of authorial discourse but also the subjects of*

their own directly signifying discourse" (emphasis in original). Thus the effects of an author's words maintain contact with her intent but are not exhausted by it.

38. For the distinction, see Emerson and Morson 1990.233–44 and passim.

39. Compare, for example, the boast of Wrong to be able to discover γνώμας καινάς (896) with the claim of the chorus that Aristophanes always brings on stage καινὰς ἰδέας (547). Cf. *Wasps* 1044 and 1053, *Frogs* 1178–79. See also van Leeuwen 1898.151 (s.v. ῥηματίοισιν καινοῖς) for a good collection of passages referring to the "novelty" of Aristophanic comedy. For the association of shared characteristics of Aristophanes with the villains of *Clouds*, see Bowie 1993.132. See also Silk 2000a.45–48.

40. This passage shows well the degree to which Aristophanes' carnivalization of literary language makes it impossible for others, even his own characters, to lay their own claim to a word and to use language straightforwardly without an echo of other, more or less appropriate, texts. Right's self-righteous claim to "speak just things" not only styles him as the inheritor of the moralistic tradition well established in Greek literature, but of its parasites as well. Specifically, his words evoke, and lay claim to, the authority of Dikaiopolis-Telephus from *Acharnians* (317, 501, and the related Euripides frag. 706 N2. = Preiser 23), thereby limiting the value of his rhetorical coup by basing its authority upon the thing it ostentatiously rejects.

41. I read with Dover 1968 ταῦτ' in place of Hall and Geldart's γ' αὖτ'. In various places, I use Dover's arrangement of the text on the page (e.g., at 1024–31), where it makes the lineation easier to follow.

42. The appeal to novelty is not limited to Aristophanic characters, as at Eupolis frag. 60 K.-A., where καινοτέρας ἰδέας are presented as a liability.

43. Van Leeuwen 1898 suggests that Wrong is recognized by his mask as a particular citizen and that the reference to lead (913) alludes to a specific incident in the recent past. There is, however, no good evidence that the *logoi* were meant to represent specific Athenians living or dead. The expression οὐ δῆτα πρὸ τοῦ, moreover, recalls Strepsiades' ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν πρὸ τοῦ (5), an unspecific evocation of prewar life when you could beat your slaves without worrying about them running off. See also *Wasps* 231.

44. See Dover 1968.211 on personification over abstraction. I follow Dover 1968 in regarding Wrong's mention of Dike here and at 902 as referring to the personified abstraction, and so print her name with a capital letter.

45. See also Aeschylus frag. 281 R. For the sources, see Gantz 1993.44–48.

46. For αἰβοεῖ in a similar sense, compare the response of Pheidippides when his father mentions the school of Socrates (102); cf. Xanthias at *Wasps* 37, when the presence of Cleon "the tanner" in Sosias's dream causes Xanthias to detect the smell of rotten leather.

47. Right's outrage was doubtless comic from the start, as jokes about the emasculating effects of the bath do not appear to have been rare. Hermippus frag. 68 K.-A. refers to the practice of θερμολουτεῖν ("warm bathing") with dis-

dain. Adespota frag. 555 K.-A. refers to the ἅβροι ("delicate men") who are regulars there.

48. His familiarity with such arguments also indirectly strikes at the heart of Wrong's pretension to novelty. If Right, who hardly qualifies as a member of the avant-garde, has encountered them, they cannot be particularly new.

49. The scene also anticipates the later episode when Pheidippides beats Strepsiades, then argues that the prohibition against father-beating can be overturned if he can persuade his father that his action was just (1421–29). See also 1410–19 for an intertextual inversion of father and son, with Strepsiades playing the role of the son Admetus in Euripides' *Alcestis* (691) against Pheidippides as his father Pheres.

50. Dover 1968.218; see also Taillardat 1965.51, 341.

51. *Knights* 1331, Thucydides 1.6.3. See Neil 1901.

52. It was apparently a part of the Dipoleia. See Parke 1987.162–67, Guidorizzi and Del Corno 1996.304, and Parker 1996.399.

53. Dover 1968.226 discusses the monstrous quality of nouns formed with "–hippos." See also Olson 1998.181.

54. It is unclear to what extent Wrong's interpretation of Zeus's behavior can be considered new. Helen defends herself on the same principle in Euripides' *Troades* 948–50. In a culture where the actions of the gods had already been criticized as offering a poor model of moral behavior, the odds would seem to favor the belief that Wrong's justification of adultery makes use of a well-worn line of argument.

55. Wrong represents the extreme, of course, but Right's case is not targeted against Wrong but against the present practices of the Athenians, of whom Wrong is only an extreme example. See, for example, Right's formulation at 1015: not "If you listen to Wrong" but "If you practice the ways of today's youth" (ἅπερ οἱ νῦν). Indeed, part of Right's ludicrousness is due to the fact that many of the things he castigates are not modern innovations at all (such as might be promulgated by Wrong) but activities typical of the generation that preceded Aristophanes. It is as if I were to complain about the decay of modern culture and claim (not without reason) that Dean Martin was at the heart of it all. Cf. Dover 1968.216 s.v. Φρῦνιν.

56. For Antimachos, see *Acharnians* 1150.

57. See also the Clouds' reference to τι καινόν (1032). Note the resonance between Wrong's comparison of the effect of his attack to that of a swarm of hornets (946–47) and Socrates' description of the Clouds as a σμῆνος, "swarm" (297). Cf. Cratinus 2 K.-A.: σοφιστῶν σμῆνος, "a swarm of sophists." The association of all three passages with rhetoric is striking.

58. This bias also appears to confirm Socrates' earlier words to Strepsiades that the Clouds are nurturers of Sophists (391).

59. I follow here the text of Dover 1968.

60. Right, by contrast, criticizes the development of oratorical skills, assimi-

lating the practice to the καταπυγοσύνη that characterizes modern life for him (1019). His education, he claims, will produce a γλῶτταν βαιάν, "a small tongue" (1013). βαιάν, however, is paratragic, as at *Acharnians* 2 (Richards 1909.133, Starkie 1911.230, Silk 2000; cf. Chapter 1), but is also dialogized further by the new context produced by *Acharnians*. Right's choice of words characteristically undermines his intent.

61. See *Knights* 1378–81; Neil 1901.9, 180 reasonably connects the practice with the influence of Gorgias.

3. *Clouds* on *Clouds* and the Aspirations of *Wasps*

1. An earlier version of this chapter appeared in Platter 2003.

2. For other readings of the final scenes of the play, see Vaio 1971, Konstan 1985 and 1995, Reckford 1987, Bowie 1993, MacDowell 1995, Slater 1996 and 2002.86–111.

3. For the testimonia regarding Carcinus, see MacDowell 1971.326–27. See also Olson 1998.226 for a discussion with updated bibliography.

4. The prominence of Carcinus in *Peace* may be an indication of the positive reception accorded this scene. If so, the final competition of *Wasps* may have been a chaotic anti-contest between equally inept performers; see also Vaio 1971.348–51. There is no consensus, however. Slater 1996 associates the dance of Philocleon with the military dances performed by ephebic choruses; see also Borthwick 1968.

5. E.g., *Acharnians* 377–82, 496–508; *Knights* 507–46; *Clouds* 518–62.

6. The *parabasis* of *Clouds* as we have it dates from after 420 B.C.E., as shown by the reference to Eupolis' *Marikas* (*Clouds* 553–54); see Dover 1968.lxxx. This evidence provides only a general idea of Aristophanes' activities, however. There are many possible composition scenarios for which it is unlikely that conclusive evidence will ever emerge. Russo 1997.90–109 adduces production difficulties in our version of *Clouds*, which he attributes to incomplete revision. For the testimonia regarding the first version, see Kassel-Austin 1983.3(2).214–19.

7. The only extant play between the original *Clouds* and the presumed date of its revision (420–17) is *Peace* (421), which, in addition, has a special dialogical relationship to *Wasps*, with lines 751–60 "repeating" almost verbatim *Wasps* 1029–37.

8. *Acharnians* 1–42; *Clouds* 1–24, 39–55, 60–78.

9. *Knights* 40–72; *Wasps* 54–76; *Peace* 43–59, 64–81; *Birds* 30–48.

10. For the image, see also *Lysistrata* 476, Cratinus frag. 251 K.-A., Aeschylus *Eumenides* 644. The word's tragic associations create a disturbance in the field of this comic exchange; see Richards 1909.138 and Taillardat 1965.239–40. The type of disturbance produced by these sorts of intertextual phenomena is discussed in Chapter 1.

11. MacDowell 1971.136 and Pickard-Cambridge 1962.178–87. "Laughter stolen from Megara" (57), to be sure, may refer to the appearance in Attic

comedy of features that were actually related to the historical or contemporary attributes of Megarian comedy. Ecphantides frag. 3 K.-A. suggests that this is a distinct possibility, yet the evidence is not at all clear. For Aristophanes' practice of "auto-criticism," see Hubbard 1991.96–106.

12. For the practice of treats for the audience, see, for example, *Wealth* 797–801.

13. Parallels are not lacking; cf. *Lysistrata* 928, etc. See also Henderson 1991.131, Hubbard 1991.32–33.

14. μηχανά, "device," itself suggests a lower register of language (Richards 1909.141) and offers a good example of the subtle ways in which form matches content to create emphasis, as opposed to the ironic effect produced by elevated phrases in a comic context (e.g., *Acharnians* 69: ὁδοιπλανοῦντες, "roaming," apparently formed on analogy with tragic ὁδοιπορέω, "walk"; Olson 2002.93). Bauck 1880.41–42 implausibly sees an allusion to the Socratic Eucleides, a renowned *mechanopoios*.

15. Cf. *Frogs* 564. For the presence of burlesque in Doric comedy, see Pickard-Cambridge 1962.255–76. The ridicule of Euripides was, of course, an Aristophanic specialty. For audience appreciation of vulgar comedy, see Slater 1999.

16. The Megarian scene in *Acharnians* neatly captures both aspects. The attempt to pass the girls off as pigs was no doubt played in such a way as to extract from it significant vulgar comic effects. At the same time, by making its author a Megarian himself, Aristophanes affects to show the typical behavior of Megarians on stage and, rhetorically, to strike another blow for his comedy's higher calling. For Megarian humor, see also Taillardat 1965.257.

17. Scholiast on Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 4.2 1123a20.

18. For Megarian in the general sense, see MacDowell 1971.136 and Pickard-Cambridge 1962.178–87. Henderson 1991.224–28 sees the term as a wholly imaginary conceit with no non-Attic connections at all. The historicity of comic allusions to contemporary "events" is well formulated by Pelling 2000.34, 130. Pelling agrees that allusions must be intelligible (i.e., imaginable) to the audience if they are to be funny, but rejects the "grain of truth" hypothesis, often used to rescue the historical application of Aristophanic allusions. Pelling concludes that such allusions need have no *literal* truth in them at all. See Silk 1993.489, who distrusts Aristophanes' literary judgments on similar grounds, particularly his characterization of Euripides as the great democratizer of Athenian tragedy.

19. For the image, see Taillardat 1965.348–49.

20. See the scholia on *Knights* 771 and *Wasps* 63.

21. This is not an argument about the merit of Aristophanes' achievement compared to that of his rivals, a tedious business, to be sure, even if their work had been preserved with equal completeness. It does, however, imply a plausible model of audience response. The audience, which, of course, does not consult other texts, views the play as a single stream of action and speech and is much

more easily influenced by dramatic rhetoric. For any statement about the quality of Aristophanes' humor to be persuasive on anything but a broad level, numerous qualifications would need to be made regarding Athenian habituation to this kind of rhetoric and the tendency of audiences to be active spectators. Nevertheless, in general, it can be said that Aristophanes' rhetoric is potentially effective for the same reason the "Big Lie" is potentially effective: anything repeated frequently enough, whatever its value as truth, to a sufficient number of people generates its own persuasiveness, despite the critical objections of the minority and without regard to its factual inaccuracy. Just ask Cleonymos. See also Silk 2000a and Pelling 2000.

Taplin's interpretation of Aristophanes' relationship with Chairis, if justified, tells another cautionary tale (1993.63–66). Such rhetorical performances create their own effects, however, even if they are without foundation.

22. Hubbard 1986.180–97. Halliwell 1989.515–28 and Rosen 1988 point to evidence for direct and indirect collaboration between comic authors. One implication of their arguments is that such friendly collaboration would form the background against which statements concerning repetitiveness, plagiarism, and lack of talent should be measured. They are primarily forms of rhetorical disputation, not deeply held beliefs subject to verification, a fact that would not be significantly altered if all of Old Comedy had been preserved.

23. MacDowell 1971.136 notes that λίαν μέγα (56) might not refer to *Clouds*. There is no explicit mention of the play *here*, and in the context of a passage where the most speculative identifications of specific allusions have been promulgated as facts, a minimalist approach is, perhaps, not out of place. Starkie (1909, 1911), a debunker of many of these identifications from the pages of nineteenth-century scholarship, is equally promiscuous in arbitrarily reading Aristophanic comedy as *a roman à clef*. Nevertheless, the conditional form of MacDowell's assertion suggests that it is his opinion that the balance of evidence favors the idea that μέγα refers to *Clouds*.

24. "Thinking big" may have resonated with the popular image of Socrates as well, although the specific locution μέγα φρονεῖν is not uniquely associated with him (cf. *Acharnians* 988: μεγάλα . . . φρονεῖ). Nevertheless, *Clouds* 226 has περιφρονῶ ("think about" but also "despise"), and the Clouds' description of Socrates at 359–63 points in the same direction. The association is corroborated by a fragment from an undated comedy of Calias (15 K.-A.):

(A) τί δὴ σὺ σεμνὴ καὶ *προνεῖς οὕτω μέγα;*
(B) ἔξεστι γὰρ μοι· Σωκράτης γὰρ αἴτιος.

(A) Why are you so aloof and *thinking so big*?
(B) It's OK—Socrates made me that way.

See Imperio 1998.222–28 for discussion of the fragment.

25. The modesty of the play has been questioned; see MacDowell 1995.175–79 and Strauss 1966.

26. Much remains uncertain about the details of voting in the dramatic competitions and the effects of audience reaction. For a discussion of Aelian's claim that audiences specifically tried to influence the voting, see Dunbar 1995.307; see also Pickard-Cambridge 1968.95–99 and Slater and Csapo 1995.157–65.

27. For additional ambiguities in *Wasps*' remarks about its moderation, see Reckford 1987.398–401.

28. This self-characterization is not limited to his activities in producing *Clouds* but also *Knights* and other plays in which Cleon figured prominently, as seems guaranteed by the aspect of ἐπιχειρεῖν (1030). For *Wasps*' perspective on *Clouds*, see Reckford 1987.396–97 and Hubbard 1991.88–112.

29. For ἀλεξίκακος as an epithet of Herakles, see MacDowell 1971; for Herakles as a "purifier," see Sophocles *Trachiniae* 1012: πολλὰ μὲν ἐν πόντῳ . . . καθαίρων and Euripides *Herakles* 225. Note that the characterization of Aristophanes as a second Herakles is a joke with several levels of meaning. Aristophanes' rivals Aristonymos (cf. test. 3 K.-A.), Ameipsias (whose *Connus* finished second ahead of *Clouds* in 423), and Sannyrion (frag. 5 K.-A.) may have already mocked him as a second Herakles, whose literary "ventriloquism," alluded to at *Knights* 541–45, amounted to ἑτέροις πονῶν, "laboring for others." The fragments, however, are undated, and Halliwell 1989.522 suggests that they could just as easily have been a response to Aristophanes' self-presentation in *Wasps*. Aristophanes' joke in *Wasps*, then, would be an attempt to recover control of the image and to deploy it on his own behalf. Whatever the chronological relationship, such tactics would be tedious if seriously applied. Here, however, the image of Aristophanes as Herakles, ludicrous enough in itself, is ironized by Xanthias's earlier evocation of the comic Herakles (60). Thus when Aristophanes proclaims his service to humanity as "purifier" and "averter of evil," he links himself to the easily duped glutton as well. For a discussion of the fragments, see also Totaro 1998.189–91.

30. As commentary, the *Clouds parabasis* appears to reject the rhetoric of moderation proposed in the slave prologue to *Wasps*. In place of affecting to lower the standard by which comedy is judged ("It is no more clever than you") in hopes of establishing a common front with the audience, Aristophanes heightens the rhetoric and essentially everyone becomes wise, even those who aren't (cf. Hubbard 1991.94). At line 521, the audience as a whole is described as "clever." The symptomatic cost of this decision can be seen in the incoherent juxtaposition of praise and blame at *Clouds* 525–26. Here the earlier elevation of everyone to the ranks of the "clever" (in contrast to *Wasps*, where the distinction between οἱ σοφοί and οἱ μὴ γνῶντες is more rigorously maintained) brings about the present situation in which the same people must be praised for wisdom and blamed for their lack of understanding.

31. Pickard-Cambridge 1962.148–50 summarizes the evidence with bibliography. The debate has recently been extended, with Hubbard 1991.16–33

arguing that the complex textual situation of the *parabasis* testifies to its position as a work-in-progress, not a fossil of forgotten ritual.

32. The following remarks hold equally true for the problematic *rhesis* of Dikaiopolis in *Acharnians* (366–84), where the main character himself takes on the voice of the poet. See also Goldhill 1991.191–92 and Hubbard 1991.45–47.

33. See, however, *Peace* 729–33, where the chorus' metatheatrical comments emphasize their status as a third party and reduce their ability to be perceived as transparent shills for the author.

34. Cf. Bakhtin 1981.254–57. The language, *already* double-voiced as described earlier, is thus reinscribed within a context in which its authority is both emphatically asserted and implicitly denied.

35. While *Wasps* affects to reveal the author, Plato uses the character of Socrates to both suggest and resist interpretation of the relationship between his own opinions and those of his "spokesman" Socrates. The subject remains controversial for the dialogues, and some are impatient with the qualifications to positive interpretation made necessary once the philosophical ramifications of the dramatic form have been acknowledged. The literature is vast, and it would be distracting to survey it in detail. I have yet to see a convincing philological or philosophical justification for de-emphasizing the dramatic features of the dialogues, nor authority for eliding without qualification the views of Plato and those of his character, Socrates. For a survey of opinions, see Tigerstedt 1977 and Irwin 1992.

36. Plato is referred to twice in the dialogues, once in a passage in *Apology* (38b6–8), where his offer to help pay Socrates' potential fine has the apparently polemical function of justifying Plato's alleged failure to save his teacher. For the adversarial tradition of the Socratic dialogues (not limited, of course, to Plato's), see Riginos 1977. The other reference to Plato is at the beginning of *Phaedo* (59b10–11), where his absence due to illness is mentioned in passing. In both cases, he appears as a character, never as author.

The Platonic *Letters* are interesting and relevant to the issues involved in interpreting the dialogues, but they do not decisively affect the point made here; see Strauss 1968. For illuminating discussion of the world of the dialogues from a prosopographical standpoint, see now Nails 2002.

37. I do not include here *Symposium* and, in particular, the speech of Diotima. Although prominence is given to her at the expense of Socrates, the experience is reported and interpreted by him, an act that transforms Socrates from passive listener to active signatory to the truth of her instruction. This double dialogization produces its own *aporiai*, but the presence of Socrates in some important sense seems nevertheless guaranteed.

38. Instead, we find exactly the opposite. While the chronology of the Platonic dialogues is speculative, most would agree that the dialogues mentioned above come from the later part of Plato's career, with a consensus that *Laws* is his final work; see Ledger 1989 and Nails 2002.

39. Consider, to take a simple example, the opening book of the *Republic* (327c6–10). Far from being evangelical in the service of justice, Socrates must be compelled to enter the conversation at all, in contrast to Plato, who, presumably, actually *desired* to write the *Republic*. Such passages, I think, should make interpreters who attempt to fuse Socrates and Plato very uncomfortable. See also Strauss 1968.

40. Speculation about the metamorphosis of Old Comedy and the decline of Athens are interesting for literary history, but they are not relevant to the point I am making about authorial intent.

41. For further discussion, see Bakhtin 1986.79, 96.

42. This is precisely the case in Cratinus's famous *Wine Flask*, vanquisher of *Clouds* in 423, which portrayed the drunken poet's reconciliation with his wife Comoedia. In whatever way Cratinus's stage drinking may have corresponded to his actual behavior, its primary significance must have been literary, since it responds so closely to the picture of him presented in Aristophanes' fanciful "history of comedy" at *Knights* 526–36. The same principle is at work in *Acharnians* 366–83, where Dikaiopolis speaks in the name of Aristophanes *outside* of the *parabasis*. Much discussion in recent years has addressed the possibility that Dikaiopolis was played by Aristophanes himself and that this was known to a substantial part of the audience. For a defense of this position originally proposed by Bailey 1936, see Slater 1989 and now Slater 2002.62 and passim, with further bibliography. See also Heiden 1994 and Sutton 1988.

There is nothing inherently implausible in this idea, although given the youth of Aristophanes at the time, the number of people to whom he was personally known was probably small, not extending far beyond people involved in the theater and the sort of men referred to in *Clouds* as δεξιοί (527), who had appreciated Aristophanes' first play *Banqueters* (427 B.C.E.). The dialogical situation that would thus emerge as a result of having Aristophanes as Dikaiopolis would be characterized by a distinctive *frisson* among the spectators with insider information. Accordingly, the experience of watching the *young* Aristophanes speak for "himself" through the *old* Dikaiopolis clearly would be far different from talking with him on the street or even hearing him speak in the assembly.

43. Bakhtin's emphases allude to the irreducible distance between author and spectator imposed by dramatic form itself. Twentieth-century theater elevated to a major theme the theater's inability to present unqualified declarations of purpose or keys to its own interpretation by questioning the conventional boundaries of theatrical space, particularly those that separate audience and action. See, for example, Brecht's *The Good Woman of Szechwan*, Luigi Pirandello *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, Peter Weiss *Marat/Sade*, etc. This tendency is the result of a sustained reflection on dramatic form, but given the clear metatheatrical interests of Aristophanic comedy, it is not surprising that many of the same problematic issues arise for it.

44. The details of the *proagon*, at which comic poets may have introduced

their choruses and given a summary of their plays, are not well known. For the sources, see Slater and Csapo 1995.105, 109–10. The loss of Aristophanes' play *Proagon* is particularly lamentable; cf. the scholia on *Wasps* 61. The existence of *proagon* summaries, however, even if they should turn out to have been institutionalized, would not alter the basic problem, since the summaries would still be external to the plays themselves and with no more inherent authority than a two-paragraph (or multi-sonnet) summary by Cervantes of *Don Quixote*.

45 *Wasps* 1017, 1024, 1027, 1029, 1036, and 1037.

46. Bakhtin 1986.101 distinguishes between the abstract components that comprise a sentence and *utterances*, which are produced by speakers and have a context: "We must allow that any sentence, even a complex one, in the unlimited speech flow, can be repeated an unlimited number of times, in completely identical form. But as an utterance no one sentence, even if it has only one word, can ever be repeated: it is always a new utterance." See also p. 127, which characterizes the utterance as "an unrepeatable, historically unique individual whole." For an interesting approach to anaphora based on deictics, see Slings 1997 and 2002.100–03.

47. This aspect is intensified in *Wasps* by the fact that four of the six examples of φησίν in the *parabasis* are denials that, as they imply a charge, explicit or unexplicit, are always open to doubt. For lying as the fundamental poetic problem, see Hesiod *Theogony* 6–24. For a related Aristophanic example, see the prologue of *Plutus*, where Apollo's reputation as a σοφός is thrown into question by Karion's pointed φασιν (11). See also Eupolis frag. 159 K.-A., where φασ' also reports an unbelievable statement.

48. Such a reading of 1016–17 has immediate implications within the text. What is the status of the participial phrase dependent on πεποιηκώς? Does it represent the opinion of the chorus and, therefore, give further credence to the poet's complaint? Or does it characterize the mind of the poet as he complains ("I've benefited them, and this is how they repay me!"), in which case the participial phrase would only contribute to the poet's self-characterization without affecting the state of ambivalence introduced by φησίν ("The poet, feeling that he has benefited the audience, says that he has been wronged"). The question cannot be decided on a philological basis alone. This aporia, like the one discussed above in the context of the *parabasis* and the intent of the author, points less to a crisis of interpretation than to an opportunity to be exploited by Aristophanes and his rivals.

49. To take the extreme view, even the chorus' attribution of the general content of the *parabasis* to the poet, regardless of whether or not they agree with it, is also open to question. By highlighting the act of reporting speech itself, φησίν also draws attention to the fact that the audience has no evidence for the provenance of the chorus' speech beyond their own attribution.

50. See Halliwell 1991.53, who argues that comic license developed as a result of the special character of the festival and was enhanced by habituation

to produce a space in which laughter, viewed as harmful under normal circumstances, was treated as something like "playful" laughter. As such, it would clearly correspond to the ambivalent laughter I have been discussing in that it works directly to the diminution of the target on one level, while, at the same time, allowing him to exhibit urbanity through his ability to take a joke.

51. It is used in a similar sense at *Frogs* 777 by the doorkeeper in Hades to describe Euripides' self-importance.

52. Cf. *Knights* 512–15, where the poet's unbelievable modesty is rendered more unbelievable by the double φησίν at 512 and 514.

53. For the thematic significance of "novelty," see also *Peace* 54, 750; *Birds* 256–57, 1384–85; *Frogs* 1178–79.

54. See MacDowell 1971.264 for references to Eurykles.

55. There are, of course, numerous differences between the passages as well, especially in terms of elaboration. For example, whereas the *Clouds parabasis* details the abuses of Aristophanes' rivals (537–43), in *Wasps*, this material appears in the slave prologue.

56. This attitude is shared by the revised *Clouds parabasis* at 529, but by implication elsewhere, e.g., at 561–62. Cf. *Wasps* 1049: ὁ δὲ ποιητὴς οὐδὲν χείρων παρὰ τοῖσι σοφοῖς νενόμισται,

57. Neil 1901.80; see *Peace* 700 and Olson 1998.211–12. The topic was also treated by the comic poet Phrynichus (cf. frags. 6–8 K.-A.). It seems unlikely that the audience's response to the chorus' evocation of πονηρὰ σκώμματα was altogether solemn.

58. An undated fragment of Cratinus (317 K.-A.) also refers to the misery of Connus. Thus the reference to Cratinus as Connus at *Knights* 534 may well turn Cratinus into one of his own characters, something that Cratinus did for himself in *Wine Flask*. Cf. Aristophanes' similar treatment of Euripides at *Acharnians* 410–13 and *Thesmophoriazusae* 871–1132, as well as Agathon's description of the creative process at *Thesmophoriazusae* 146–52. In view of this complex set of interconnections, it would be especially interesting to know more about Ameipsias's play. For the remains, see Carey 2000.420–23.

59. Five times out of the fifty-seven occurrences in the extant plays (approximately 16,272) lines. This figure represents 8.8 percent of the total number in .6 percent of the total lines.

60. Seven times out of the 107 occurrences in the extant plays. This figure represents 6.4 percent of the total number, in .6 percent of the total lines.

61. I make no methodological claims about the appropriateness of using the entire corpus as the basis of comparison here. To be sure, a more comprehensive word study might compare the frequencies cited here with those found in *parabaseis* as a whole and in other programmatic passages, although the lack of precision of the latter term hints at some of the obstacles to a rigorous formulation of the problem.

62. 520: νομιζοίμην, σοφός; 521: ἡγούμενος, δεξιούς; 522: σοφώτατ'; 523: ἠξίωσ'; 525: ἄξιος; 526: σοφοῖς; 527: δεξιούς.

63. The γνω- words cited here also allude to Xanthias's reference to the play's γνώμη, "judgment" (64). The examples from *Clouds* again point to the sense in which the *Clouds parabasis* is both a continuation of and commentary on *Wasps*.

64. Cf. φρόνημα (*Wasps* 1024) vs. εὖ φρονεῖν (*Clouds* 562).

65. It does this, of course, while giving free rein to the Megarian impulses of characters like Strepsiades, whose primary distractions are the movements of his bowels and his attempts at deceiving his creditors (cf. the Megarian trick of *Acharnians* 738).

66. At the same time, the faint praise implicit in "no wiser that you" (65) adopts an aggressive attitude toward the audience, more so even than the explicit expressions of blame at *Wasps* 1016 and Clouds 525–26.

67. Cf. *Wasps* 57: αὖ, 61: αὖθις, 1052–53: τοὺς ζηλοῦντας καινόν τι λέγειν; *Clouds* 546–47 and passim.

68. Here "highbrow" translates λίαν μέγα (56). All such evaluative terms, however, and especially those concerned with wisdom and perceptiveness (see above), must be considered primarily as rhetorical appeals to the vanity of the audience and only secondarily as accurate descriptions of the comedy and/or the audience. This type of coercive rhetoric has numerous parallels, e.g., at *Frogs* 1109–18, where the appeal to the cleverness and training of the audience is designed to pressure the audience into laughing so that they are not compelled to admit that they don't "get it."

4. Questioning Authority

1. Epic need not be monolithic stylistically to produce the effect of stability. Recent work on Homer has noted subtle distinctions observable at the level of diction; see Martin 1989. Nevertheless, the inclination is clearly in the direction of stylistic homogeneity. See also Silk 2000a.103–05.

2. Bakhtin 1981.5. The agonistic aspect of generic interaction among classical genres is undervalued by Dentith 2000.45. See Morson and Emerson 1989.66–67: "A parodic utterance is one of open disagreement. The second utterance represents the first in order to discredit it, and so it introduces a semantic direction which subverts that of the original." So also p. 71: "Parody implies a contextualization of the original as having certain covert aspects that should be exposed." Cf. Morson 1989.65.

3. Redfield 1990.317–18. See also Taplin 1993.63–66.

4. Rosen 1988. Bowie 2002 argues against Rosen for a more accidental relationship between iambos and comedy. Regardless of how the historical questions are decided, however, Old Comedy's flirtation with the idea of an iambic genealogy is nevertheless discernible, in my view, a possibility that is not diminished by the failure of Aristophanes to mention it in his "history of comedy" at *Knights*

518–40 (nor by the famous discussion of Aristotle at *Poetics* 1448b–49a). For the fictional status of iambic targets, see Nagy 1979.243–52 and Miller 1990.9–36.

5. It was certainly an attractive target to judge from the numerous examples in the fragments, as well as in the extant plays. See, for example, Aristophanes frags. 372–73 K.-A. from his *Lemnian Women*, which parody an Euripidean prologue, perhaps of *Hypsipyle*.

6. The ancient belief in Homer's authorship of *Margites* may account for the attribution to him of the phrase Μουσάων θεράπων by the Poet at *Birds* 909 (= *Margites* 1.2 West). See, however, Dunbar 1993 on *Birds* 909.

7. It must have availed itself of Homer's text, in addition to the legend of Odysseus, thus activating the intertextual dimension as well. See also frag. 352 K.-A., a parodic quotation of the *Iliad* and Hermippus frag. 47 K.-A.

8. *Wasps* 175–89. So also Cratinus frag. 70 K.-A.: Δῶροι συκοπέδιλε, "fig-sandaled bribery," a parody of epic χρυσόπεδιλος, "golden-sandaled" (an epithet of Hera: *Odyssey* 11.604). Burlesque figured importantly in Cratinus's work, most famously in his *Dionysalexandros*. See also frag. 53 K.-A. from his *Drapetides*, which treated an encounter between Theseus and Cercyon. Cf. Hermippos's *Agamemnon*, *Birth of Athena*, etc.

9. See, for example, Hope 1905.11 s.v. ἀλεωρή (*Wasps* 615), ἀπηνής (*Clouds* 974), and Richards 1909.

10. See Chapter 1. Note, however, that the term "epicism," by indicating the appearance of a word in Homer, can obscure the fact that intertextual (and so necessarily dialogic) relationships are multivalent and often heavily overdetermined. The word γάνυμαι appears in tragedy at Aeschylus *Eumenides* 970 and also in Euripides' *Cyclops*, a satyr-play (504). It is sometimes assumed that, when evaluating such ambivalent terms, it is necessary to "decide" which of the provenances is more likely to have been foremost in Aristophanes' brain at the moment when the line was composed and to interpret the passage in terms of that *auctor* alone (e.g., Dunbar 1995.689 on Herodotus vs. Sophocles' *Antigone* as a model for the chorus' ode that begins πολλὰ δὴ καὶ καινὰ καὶ θαυμάστ', 1470–93). I take it as axiomatic that, despite the testimony of Xenophon *Symposium* 8.30, which plays on the word's (unattested) epic associations, the language of both genres leaves an imprint on ἐγανώθην and that whatever paratragic force it possesses must be considered in the context of its Homeric lineage as well. Individual audience members, by contrast, would no doubt have experienced a broad range of reactions, from vague reminiscence of one sense or another of the word to full engagement with the multiple and partially convergent lines of literary history.

11. The treatment here is not exhaustive. *Frogs* 814–29 derives much of its authority from the epic tradition with its dactylic rhythms. Mock oracles are fairly common. Cf. Aristophanes frag. 308 K.-A., Eupolis frag. 249 K.-A., and Metagenes frag. 19 K.-A.

12. The bird theogony developed in the *parabasis* (685–736) also represents

an attempt by the Birds to make use of epic authority, both in their adaptation of the Hesiodic mode of narration and in the presence of numerous epicisms. I have not included it here because its anapestic tetrameters separate it from the other passages discussed. For a full discussion of the provenance of the Birds' song, see Dunbar 1995.428–58. A study of the interaction of language levels in this passage would certainly yield rich results. Yet just as for so many users of epic-oracular language in Aristophanes, their efforts are only marginally successful. Like the oracle of Lysistrata, their reconstruction of events meets with no obstacle and can, on one level, be considered a rhetorical success. Nevertheless, as the conclusion of the play makes clear, the real beneficiary of the new dispensation in the clouds is Peisthetairos himself. The lofty position proclaimed by the Birds for themselves *ab eterno*, and justified by the time-honored techniques of the Hesiodic tradition blinds them to the fact that their own stature has not changed very much.

13. This point is well emphasized by Smith 1989. See also Parke and Wormell 1966.xxx–xxxi.

14. Despite the metrical homogeneity that makes the blurring of the epic-oracular distinction possible on one level, the relationship of the two traditions remains dialogical. Occasionally the fault lines are revealed, as at *Peace* 1089–90, where Trygaios recruits Homer as his ally *against* the oracular tradition and Hierocles.

15. Burkert 1985.111–18; cf. Smith 1989.143 on the inevitable tension between the diviner and a political patron.

16. The negative assessment of *chresmologia* is, unsurprisingly, a staple of comedy. Cf. Plato Comicus frag. 161 K.-A.: χρησμῳδόληρος, "oracular nonsense." Aristophanes frag. 805 K.-A. (date unknown) has the brilliant δαφνοπώλης, "laurel-vender," as an epithet of Apollo, striking at the heart of the oracular tradition, and either anticipating or alluding to the succession myth of *Knights* 129–43.

17. For a comic version of this principle applied to poetic inspiration, the locus classicus is Plato's *Ion*, where the Muse is imagined rendering the Homeric rhapsode competent to perform a wide variety of practical tasks including generalship. Typically, Plato's approach to the problem is more circumspect than Aristophanes', although equally dismissive.

18. Note also the appearance of the dithyrambic poet at *Birds* 904–53, whose authority is in large part based on his "quotation" of Homer ("busy servant of the Muses" occurs nowhere in epic, although the words appear individually). The prosaic explanation κατὰ τὸν Ὅμηρον, "to quote Homer," produces a sudden lowering of tone (Dunbar 1995.529), which includes as a part of its comic effect the laughableness of turning Homer into a pedantic source of antiquarian phraseology. This effect is heightened by the fact that, as Sommerstein 1987.258 notes, this phrase is probably extrametrical. Thus there is a radical shift in tone not only on a thematic level but on a formal one as well.

19. The tone of her iambic trimeters is, however, elevated, including an adaptation of Euripides' *Telephus* (699 N2). For a stylistic assessment of the passage, see Henderson 1987.163–64.

20. See Neil 1901.33 for discussion and non-Aristophanic examples. For oracular motifs, see Dunbar 1995.543–50.

21. Henderson 1987.66, 168. See also Neil 1901.33, Denniston and Page 1957.133–34.

22. See also Theognis 843–44, Herodotus 1.173.3, and Diogenes Laertius 6.32, all cited in Henderson 1987.

23. παῦλα κακῶν appears in Sophocles (*Trachiniae* 1255). See also *Oedipus at Colonus* 88 and *Philoctetes* 1329.

24. Henderson 1987.168, Henderson 1991.128–29, 147, and van Leeuwen 1903.110.

25. Cf. Cratinus frag. 115 K.-A. At *Birds* 13, τῶν ὀρνέων refers generically to the bird market. See, however, Dunbar 1995.256, where the metrical ambivalence of *Birds* 305–07 potentially situates ὀρνέων within a double lekythion.

26. Van Leeuwen 1903.110. For the myth, see Gantz 1993.239–41 and Taillardat 1965.491.

27. E.g., *Birds* 99–101:

Ευ. τὸ ῥάμφος ἡμῖν σου γέλοιον φαίνεται.
Επ. τοιαῦτα μέντοι Σοφοκλέης λυμαίνεται
ἐν ταῖς τραγῳδίαισιν ἐμέ, τὸν Τηρέα

Euel. Your beak looks funny to us.
Hoopoe Such things, I assure you, Sophocles inflicts on me,
The famous Tereus, in his tragedies.

Dobrov 2001.105–32 surveys the evidence for the play of Sophocles and argues for an intense "contrafactual" relationship between *Birds* and *Tereus*. See also Dobrov 1993.

28. Dunbar 1995.164–65 argues persuasively that "a man-sized hoopoe seems too grotesque for a tragedy" and that Tereus was not shown on stage after his transformation. In fact, this is probably the point of Euelpides' remark about Tereus's beak (see the previous note). What seems *geloion* is not the shape, color, or construction of the beak that Tereus wears but that he has one at all. By making visible what was probably hidden in Sophocles' treatment of the story, Aristophanes exposes the inherent ridiculousness of tragic spectacle derived from unbelievable mythical narrative.

29. See *Birds* 83–97, Dunbar 1995.161–67, and Stone 1981.354–55. Dobrov 1993 argues for a presentation of the transformed Tereus in tableau. In view of a later reference (104–06) to Tereus's molting, Slater 2002.134–35 offers the interesting suggestion that the costume used by Aristophanes had been purchased secondhand and was obviously in bad repair. Thus the emphasis on

the costume, in addition to whatever else it does, "makes a virtue of necessity and/or choregic parsimony."

30. He is now a Hellenophile, having taught Greek to the birds among whom he dwells (199–200). Note, however, the symptomatic remainder of Tereus's crime in the lament of Procne for her lost son Itys (211–12).

31. The attention given to his costume by Peisthetairos and Euelpides also detracts from his presence by drawing audience attention to the theatricality of the moment; see Chapman 1983.12. Many of Chapman's examples of the rupture of dramatic illusion are explicable in dramatic terms alone. This standard, however, is too restrictive. Here Tereus's explicit reference to Sophocles' play makes the metatheatrical character of the scene certain. See Slater 2002.134.

32. See, for example, the contest for political supremacy that occupies much of *Knights* and, at 1151–1225, becomes explicitly focused on satisfying the bodily desires of the personified city.

33. Editors print a double dash after ὑψιβρεμέτης, indicating a true interruption, but no essential information remains to be given. Note how the integral enjambment of the oracle, which leaves the final sentence syntactically incomplete until the last line, operates rhetorically to maintain the addressee's attention until the last possible moment. For Homeric enjambment, see Kirk 1966.

34. For more capping, see *Wasps* 1224–48, where Philocleon uses it to maintain control of the imaginary symposium into which he will refuse to be fully assimilated; cf. Bowie 1993. Metrical capping in the epic-oracular mode is discussed below. The most famous example, of course, is ληκύθιον ἀπώλεσεν, which Aeschylus uses in *Frogs* to dismantle the prologues of Euripides (1206–48).

35. As noted above, the oracle itself contains numerous features that have similar effects.

36. In addition to its other functions, interruption of dactylic hexameter in comedy helps to "add liveliness and avoid tedium" (Henderson 1987.131–32). Plato Comicus frag. 189 K.-A. shows interruption *between* lines, with the interrupter reverting to iambic trimeter. For non-dactylic interruption, see *Thesmophoriazusae* 46–57. For a related passage that exploits preemptive interruption to displace the authority of Homer, see Aristophanes frag. 222 K.-A. from *Banqueters*. The father questions the good son as to the meaning of certain obscure expressions in Homer. Before the son can reply, however, his brother interrupts to quiz him about contemporary legal terminology, implying that the mastery of Homeric diction is without practical value, at least nowadays with runaway litigation, etc.

37. See also 801–04. The Sausage-Seller responds to Paphlagon's citation of λογία prophesying that Demos will someday judge in Arcadia by challenging neither the oracles' authenticity nor their interpretation. Instead, he draws attention to the gap between the Athenians' destiny to rule and Paphlagon's desire to peculate.

38. I refer to the slaves as Slave A and Slave B, except when quoting directly

from the edition of Hall and Geldart (1906). They are, however, caricatures of two Athenian generals, Demosthenes and Nicias, both prominent rivals of Cleon in the 420s. For popular interest in oracles in the fifth century, see Thucydides 2.8.2, 2.21.2; Neil 1901.15, 139; and Burkert 1985.111–18.

39. In contrast, Paphlagon chants oracles without any special emotional tone given to his actions. He may be unscrupulous about hanging onto power, but he has no special attachment to the process.

40. This is in addition, of course, to the various comforts (cushion, cloak, ointment) that the Sausage-Seller is able to offer Demos to win his favor.

41. The oracle is based on the description of the portent seen by the Trojans at *Iliad* 12.200–07; Komornicka 1967.63.

42. For both terms as descriptive of oracles, see Neil 1901.33.

43. Fontenrose 1978.829–66. See also Parke and Wormell 1966.xxvi–xxviii.

44. As in the case of Lysistrata's oracle discussed earlier, however, so here, too, the oracle is set up to perform a sort of autocritique, as ridiculous comic expressions deflate the pomposity of the diction and make it impossible to regard the text as a locus of authority. In addition to the "leather eagle" whose name recalls the numerous comic allusions to leather in the play (44, 47, 59, 136, 139, 369, 449, 740), we have references to garlic sauce (σκοροδάλμη, 199), gut-sellers (κοιλιοπώλησι, 200), and sausages (ἀλλᾶντας, 201) that, as representatives of the tradition of grotesque realism described by Bakhtin (1968, 1984), reduce the effectiveness of the oracular frame. For the prominence of this tradition in Aristophanes, see von Möllendorff 1995. For the ambivalence of the eagle in *Knights*, see Taillardat 1965.416–17.

45. His contemptuous reference to Paphlagon's "oracle-singing" (χρησμῳδῶν, 818) foreshadows this development, as it reprises the position of the slaves at 61. Cf. also 797–804.

46. See, for example, 285–98. He describes the principle at 888–89:

> ἀλλ' ὅπερ πίνων ἀνὴρ πέπονθ' ὅταν χεσείῃ
> τοῖσιν τρόποις τοῖς σοῖσιν ὥσπερ βλαυτίοισι χρῶμαι.
>
> I'm just borrowing your methods, as a man at a drinking party
> Borrows slippers when he needs to shit (trans. Henderson 1998).

47. Frag. 241 K.-A. See also *Birds* 978, where an adaptation appears, also in dactylic hexameter. For a discussion of the oracle's provenance, see Dunbar 1993.548.

48. ἄκουε δή νυν καὶ πρόσεχε τὸν νοῦν ἐμοί, "Listen now and pay attention to me" (1014). Note also the rhetorical superfluity of 1014, since it duplicates the metrical call for attention that precedes the oracle proper (1015–16).

49. See also *Knights* 1036, where he replies in iambic trimeter to Demos's praise of the Sausage-Seller's oracle before reading another of his own.

50. More literally: "How did I not see that you had become Antileon?"

51. See Neil 1901.143 for parallels.

52. Demos is actively involved in the attack on oracular speech in *Knights*. This lends some credibility to his defense of himself to the chorus (1121–30) that otherwise seems baseless if the account of the slaves in the prologue can be believed. Nevertheless, his contribution to the agon, in addition to the support he gives to the Sausage-Seller, shows a consistent tendency to criticize implicitly the pretentious tone of the oracles by interpreting their metaphors literally. Here he deflates Paphlagon's claims for himself by his ungrammatical understanding the prepositional phrase "for the lion," thus reducing the elevated language of the oracle to a prosaic reference to a historical individual. Similarly at 1069, Demos ridicules the Sausage-Seller's reference to a "dog-fox," itself a parody of the proliferation of animals that Paphlagon introduces at 1051–53, again by reducing the metaphorical language of the oracle and compelling it to refer to the pimp, Philostratos, whose nickname was apparently "Dog-Fox." Cf. *Lysistrata* 957. Philostratos himself is the target of an unidentified oracle at Eupolis frag. 249 K.-A.

53. For Cleon as "sharp-toothed," see also *Wasps* 1031, *Peace* 754 and Neil 1901.141, Hubbard 1991.126–32.

54. Paphlagon's iambic trimeter explication is bolstered by his use of poetic ἀπύω (1023) in place of a more prosaic verb of speaking; Hope 1905.24.

55. Paphlagon's primacy is based on his ability to preempt or bully potential competitors (58–60). His position is thus fatally compromised by the willingness of the Sausage-Seller to challenge him at all.

56. Demos takes the precaution of picking up a stone in case the oracle about the dog bites (1029). In so doing, he signals in advance his sympathy with the Sausage-Seller's interpretation.

57. Bauck 1880.19–20, Neil 1901.140–41, and Fontenrose 1978.166–95.

58. Trygaios (*Peace* 313–15) also calls Cleon "Cerberus," and refers to him "spluttering" (παφλάζων, from which verb the name Paphlagon—also "Paphlagonian"—gets special resonance). Neil 1901.142 and Olson 1998.194 think that the passage in *Peace* suggests that "Cerberus" was one of Cleon's nicknames. This view perhaps assigns too much significance to τόν at *Peace* 313, but is otherwise quite plausible. See also Plato Comicus frag. 236 K.-A.

59. The word has several possible meanings, all somehow concerned with enslavement—whether lawful or unlawful. It is possible that, for many in the audience, the fate of the Mytilineans and Cleon's role in it would have been called to mind; cf. Thucydides 3.37–40. The primary referent, nevertheless, may have been to Cleon's perceived bullying, as the prologue suggests (especially 63–70).

60. The two themes of his oracle replicate the dichotomy of the slave prologue, where both Paphlagon's deceitful obsequiousness and his monstrous nature are emphatically developed. The first theme appears in Slave A's narration of the new slave's alienation of their master's affection (47–49):

ὑποπεσὼν τὸν δεσπότην
ᾔκαλλ' ἐθώπευ' ἐκολάκευ' ἐξηπάτα
κοσκυλματίοις ἄκροισι.

He crouched before the master
And started flattering and fawning and toadying and swindling him
With odd tidbits of waste leather (trans. Henderson 1998).

Here Paphlagon appears as a fawning slave, whose deceptive behavior allows his true character to go unnoticed. Meanwhile, like the thieving dog of the Sausage-Seller's oracle (who steals food from his master's table), Slave A complains that Paphlagon had stolen from him the Spartan loaf that he had kneaded in Pylos. Similarly, Paphlagon's monstrosity is stressed at 75–79, where his fabulous size allows him to stand with one foot in the Ecclesia and the other in Pylos, with other body parts similarly extended. For another echo of the prologue in the Sausage-Seller's presentation, cf. ᾄδει χρησμούς (61) vs. χρησμῳδῶν (818).

61. *Olympian* 1.86; cf. *Nemean* 3.80–81.

62. Frag. 2A Davies. The primary reference is to the charge that Cleon was able to profit from the labors of others, particularly those of Demosthenes; cf. *Knights* 54–57. But see also 1057, where the conclusion the Sausage-Seller draws from the saying seems to reflect the hoplite's view of generals (here Paphlagon).

63. Note the different configuration here and in the *Clouds* agon. There the fluency of Wrong easily manipulates Right and compels him to defect. In *Knights*, until the arrival of the Sausage-Seller, Paphlagon's monopoly on oracular language allows him to reign unchallenged. The Sausage-Seller's mere presence, however, dialogizes Paphlagon's oracular monopoly and crucially undermines his authority. This is precisely the effect Bakhtin emphasizes by his juxtaposition of "epic" and "novel" (Bakhtin 1981). "Novelizing" forces, like the oracular speech of the Sausage-Seller, intrude upon monologic forms of discourse and polemicize with them, rendering them unable to make use of their status as venerable repositories of uncontested truth.

64. Because of the sequence in which the two representations appear, the discontinuity is not felt strongly on the level of plot. The repudiation of Homer takes place long after he has helped Trygaios to dispatch Hierocles. The different rhetorical tactics employed here compared with Aristophanes' treatment of Euripides are striking and significant. Cf. *Frogs* 786–94, where the unwillingness of Aristophanes to represent Sophoclean tragedy stands in contrast to his treatment of Sophocles' *Peleus* in *Clouds* (see Chapter 2).

65. Hierocles of Oreus was a well-known chresmologue at Athens whose career can be documented as far back as 446/5. In contrast to the style of representation in *Knights*, where the oracle-wielding adversary is a fictional character (however plainly meant to be recognized as Cleon), here a historical character is brought on stage. Nothing can be said, however, of the accuracy of the rep-

resentation; see Olson 1998.268–69. He also appears in Eupolis (frag. 231 K.-A.): Ἱερόκλεες βέλτιστε χρησμῳδῶν ἄναξ (itself a reworking of Aeschylus *Seven Against Thebes* 40: Ἐτεόκλεες, φέριστε Καδμείων ἄναξ. For chresmologues in Athenian society, see Olson 1998.269.

66. His character is effectively summarized by the exchange between Trygaios and the slave at 1048–50:

Τρ. δῆλός ἐσθ' οὗτος γ' ὅτι
ἐναντιώσεταί τι ταῖς διαλλαγαῖς.
Ο. οὔκ, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν κνῖσαν εἰσελήλυθεν.

Tryg. It's clear that he will obstruct the peace somehow.
Slave No, he has come on account of the smoke.

67. He repeats the questions in condensed form at 1054, still with emphasis on the specific identity of the deity.

68. This instance is less certain than the others. Olson 1998 gives ποῦ τράπεζα to Hierocles, arguing (p. 271) that the attribution in the manuscripts of all of 1059 to Trygaios cannot be right since it was Trygaios himself who brought the table (c. 1036). It is hard to be sure, however, since we do not know the original staging. Trygaios saying distractedly, "Where [did I put that] table?" seems perfectly natural.

69. This ambivalence is nicely captured by Trygaios's σιγῇ (1053), which refers to the need to refrain from ill-omened speech but conveniently recapitulates Trygaios's proposal at 1051. The need to roast carefully the ὀσφύς indicates clearly to Hierocles that he has been preempted. For the importance of the ὀσφύς and κέρκος in divination, see Olson 1998.270–71.

70. Specifically, he is concerned with the proper preparation of the sacrificial meal, but in the context of the play, where peace and war have precise homologues in plenty and scarcity, the preparation of the sacrifice and the pleasure of the feast are even more closely intertwined than usual. Thus the feast preparation scenes in *Acharnians* and *Birds* are good parallels for the scene with Trygaios and Hierocles, even though Trygaios's personal consumption of the food is not emphasized. Contrast, for example, *Acharnians* 237–79, where Dikaiopolis' preparations for the Rural Dionysia share the same concern for piety (e.g., εὐφημεῖτε, 237) but not the same interest in food. Cf., however, *Acharnians* 1097–1142, where Dikaiopolis' detailed anticipation of the feast trumps Lamachos's martial preparations.

71. Note how in the lines immediately prior to the shift to dactylic hexameter, Trygaios counteracts the stilted, unresolved trimeters of Hierocles with a drop in tone to the colloquial ἀλλ' οἶσθ' ὃ δρᾶσον (1061), followed by a third-foot dactyl.

72. See Bakhtin 1984 for the relationship between authority and generic isolation.

73. Both passages, with their public dramatizations of entrenched power overturned from below, have important connections with the trope of Saturnalian reversal or "uncrowning" discussed by Bakhtin 1968 as an essential component of "carnival time."

74. The strategy is reprised at 1104, where Hierocles' attempts to share in the sacrificial meal are interrupted by Trygaios's extrametrical call for a libation.

75. See Olson 1998.272–79.

76. Interrupted after the fourth foot, he resumes at the beginning of a line (1064). Interrupted after the completion of a line, he is compelled to continue from the middle of the second or third foot (1066)—the assignment of τί γελᾷς is problematic; see Olson 1998.273. Interrupted again at the end of the fourth foot (1068), he does not resume until the first foot of 1070. Finally, interrupted at the penthimemeral caesura 1074, he is not able to resume until the first foot of the next line.

77. I follow the text of Olson 1998. For the bibliography, see Olson 1998.276.

78. The indebtedness of 1078 to the Aesopic tradition has been noted, as is unsurprising in a genre where animals figure so prominently; see Olson 1998.276. The presence of the proverb in Archilochus (frag. 196a.39–41 West), however, suggests the possibility that other generic associations are in play, as does the explicit quotation of Archilochus later in the play (1298–1301 = frag. 5 West).

79. He also reprises the logic typical of both carnival and comedy that privileges food and drink over non-bodily concerns and desires; see Bakhtin 1968.

80. Thus Hierocles' objection at 1095: οὐ μετέχω τούτων· οὐ γὰρ ταῦτ' εἶπε Σίβυλλα, "I have no share of these things, for the Sibyl does not say them," has absolutely no effect, since he can no longer credibly make the claim that his oracles alone should form the basis of Trygaios's authority.

81. Cf. 1052 and 1054, similar questions that, nevertheless, do not entertain the possibility that Trygaios could possess oracular authority that did not originate with Hierocles.

82. To accomplish this, Trygaios concludes by travestying the oracular warnings made earlier by Hierocles, first the *adynaton* concerning the marriage of wolf and sheep (1111–12 = 1076a), then the proverb about the hedgehog's everlasting prickliness (1114 = 1086).

83. Of course, no victory is truly final over the rapacious Hierocles, and the scene does not end until he is forcibly driven from the stage by iambic body blows (1119).

84. Strictly speaking, however, the first passage (1090–94), unlike the second (1097–98), is not epic at all but a pastiche of Homeric lines and formulae. For the diction, see Olson 1998.278.

85. Contrast, for example, the style of reading implied by the scene with the sons of Lamachos and Cleonymos (1270–1302).

86. The efficacy of this style of presentation seems to be confirmed by the final hexameter exchange between Trygaios and Hierocles, which culminates with Trygaios switching to iambic trimeters in mid speech to invite the entire audience, minus Hierocles, to the feast (1115–16). The view of Homer developed here also looks forward to the manner in which Trygaios attempts to rehabilitate the poetic repertoire of Lamachos's son later in the play (1279–89).

87. Indeed, one might speculate that the ability of Trygaios to use Homeric poetry successfully to promote the cause of peace lies less in the intrinsic persuasiveness of his portrayal of Homer than in the rigidity of Hierocles' fidelity to his (apparently) narrowly defined "Sibylline" corpus (1095).

88. E.g., Lamachos in *Acharnians*, as well as its chorus, and the chorus of *Wasps*. See Konstan 1985.32–34 on the political resonance of such spiritedness; also Konstan 1995.18–20.

89. In the scene with Hierocles, Homer is described as σοφός (1096) and his manner of expression κάλλιστον (1089) and δεξιόν (1096). In this scene, which reverses these ethical valuations, Homer is not directly criticized himself; the negative expressions are asymmetrically applied to Boy A (1271–72, 1277–78, 1288–89).

90. Cf. *Lysistrata* 189–90, where the appropriateness of the martial Aeschylus for the women's vow to bring about peace is challenged on similar grounds.

91. Frag. F1 Davies. The rest of Boy A's song is based on passages from the *Iliad*; Olson 1998.307–08.

92. So attributed by Herodotus 4.34. See Olson 1998.307 and Huxley 1969.

93. For κακοδαίμων, see *Acharnians* 105, 473, and passim; κατάρατον: *Ecclesiazusae* 949 (masculine nominative and vocative are more frequent than the neuter); for ἀμαθές γε, see *Clouds* 135, where the masculine form appears.

94. This sort of self-reflexivity is not altogether unknown in the *Iliad* and, especially, in the *Odyssey*, with its frequent depictions of poetry and singing. Nevertheless, these poems and their understandably aoidophilic bias do not approach Trygaios's behavior in attempting to hold Homeric poetry to a high standard of social utility.

95. Cf. *Odyssey* 8.538, where Alcinous stops the performance of Demodocus on the grounds that the singer is not "pleasing to all" (παντέσσι χαριζόμενος); also 9.5–11.

96. It is, of course, true that Homeric audiences are presented as having their own preferences that might be imagined to affect their reaction to a song. Most significant are the reactions of Telemachus to the song in *Odyssey* 1 and Odysseus's problematic response to the songs of Demodocos in the Phaeacian episode. In both of these passages, however, the basis for an individual's preference is assumed to be special personal circumstances that would not affect the pleasure others might take in a song. Trygaios's position is the opposite and amounts to an assertion that epic poetry has reached the end of its history with the institution of the new prosperity.

97. Olson 1998.308 notes that the epic feel of Trygaios's diction here is heightened by the omitted augment of προτίθεντο (1281).

98. He signals his willingness to do this earlier in the exchange at 1278, where he transfers the epithet ὀμφαλοέσσας from ἀσπίδας (1274) to οἰμωγή (1276). His metaphorical use of θωρήσσοντ', "gird one's self = get drunk" (1286) also suggests the possibility of a distinct consciousness existing alongside the epic ideology. For the image in comedy, see Taillardat 1965.96–97.

99. Olson 1998.309. For a joke based on the same ambivalence but without generic resonance, see *Acharnians* 1135.

100. Frag. 5.4 West: ἐρρέτω· ἐξαῦτις κτήσομαι οὐ κακίω ("Let it go. I'll get another one just as good").

101. The precise relationship between Homer and Archilochus is the subject of great controversy, and it is no longer possible to point to Archilochus as the first European, that is, the first individual with a personal voice not entirely subsumed by the dominant ideological constructs or his time or the stylistic demands of epic poetry. Gentili 1988.107–14 argues persuasively that certain "individual" features that have been interpreted autobiographically also have a rich folk history that makes their appearance in the biography of the historical Archilochus suspicious at best (see also Nagy 1979). For this reason, it is hazardous to speculate to what degree Archilochus intends the epithet ἀμώμητον, "blameless," to stand in ironic juxtaposition to its epic usage or whether its position in Archilochus's shield poem is more importantly determined by the epithet's metrical efficacy (see the classic discussion of the epithet in Parry 1973). What is beyond dispute, however, is the fact that when Aristophanes embeds Archilochus's poem in *Peace*, he clearly regards the associations of ἀμώμητον to be significant. It is recalled antonymically later in the conversation with Trygaios's κατῄσχυνας (1301) and prevents the Archilochean text (whatever its relationship to its author) from having the last word.

102. For Cleonymos, see Olson 1998.167; Dunbar 1995.238–39, 689–91; MacDowell 1971.130. His first appearance as a "shield-thrower" is at *Wasps* 19.

103. See Chapter 1 for the effect of Dikaiopolis' admiration on the reputation of Aeschylus.

104. The failure of this attempt (as well as that of the Poet) is, however, suggested in advance by the discussion concerning the name of the city that immediately precedes their entrances. That the Birds' ambivalent call for a name that is χαῦνόν (819), alternatively "airy" or "insubstantial," is treated as unproblematic by Peisthetairos suggests a familiarity with pretentious rhetoric that will be able to deflect the claims that are made later; cf. Dunbar 1995.5, 491.

105. Dunbar 1995.543 suggests a veiled reference to the *daimonion* of Socrates in the vagueness of τὸ θεῖον and in its inhibiting influence; cf. Plato *Apology* 31c-d, 40b. The apparent relationship of τὸ θεῖον to the oracle of Bakis, however, makes the allusion problematic. The *daimonion* of Socrates exercises a purely negative function, with no oracular adjunct.

106. Compare the behavior of Hierocles (above). Frustrated by the response to his trimeter warnings, he switches to dactylic hexameter both as an appeal to higher authority and as an act of desperation.

107. Sommerstein 1987.262, Dunbar 1995.545.

108. Dunbar 1995.545 admits the possibility, but attributes the distortion of familiar language to Aristophanes rather than the Oracle-Seller. It is more productive, however, to see the change as motivated by the requirements that the Oracle-Seller feels himself to be laboring under in his attempt to exploit the new status quo.

109. See Dunbar 1995.545 for a discussion of the more complex history of the oracle and its meaning, apart from the later popular use of the phrase.

110. Cf. the scholia to *Knights* 1013a. On another level, of course, it signals in advance the failure of his project by assimilating it to the failed tactics of Paphlagon and Hierocles.

111. For the expected sacrifice of oxen replaced by "some sheep" (856) that turn out to be a goat, see Sommerstein 1987.254 and Dunbar 1995.506.

112. See above. Perhaps the Oracle-Seller regards the oracle as a piece of flattery particularly well suited to democracies. If so, it is unsurprising that it has little effect on the tyrannical Peisthetairos.

113. Sixth half-metron resolved (974), fourth half-metron resolved (976), unresolved (980).

114. The repetitions, of course, also set the stage for the Oracle-Seller's objection to Peisthetairos's counter-oracle and Peisthetairos's reply (989 = 980).

115. For Bakhtin's understanding of "utterance," see the Introduction.

5. The Return of Telephus

1. See Pickard-Cambridge 1962.230–90 and Cassio 2002.

2. See Chapter 3.

3. *Acharnians* was produced in early 425. The dating of *Thesmophoriazusae* remains controversial, although I accept the view of Sommerstein 1994.1–3 that the play was produced in 411.

4. See Rau 1967.19–114. A natural extension to this chapter would connect the issues raised by Aristophanes' continuing interest in *Telephus* with the other parodies of the play (*Palamedes*, *Helen*, *Andromeda*). Such an investigation lies beyond the scope of this book, however.

5. For the civic and ritual context of the women's "assembly," see Bowie 1993.209–10.

6. Cratinus frag. 342 K.-A. The apparent response of Aristophanes (frag. 488 K.-A.) essentially acknowledges the accuracy of the charge. Aristophanes attempts to distinguish himself from Euripides on the dubious grounds that the *nous* of Euripides is more "talkative." Cf. *Frogs* 1052 for the link between the travestying power of Aristophanic comedy and its Euripidean double. See Silk 2000a.415–17 for the stimulating effect of Euripides on Aristophanes.

7. Similarly, the significance of *Telephus* in *Frogs* is not limited to the particular characteristics of Euripides' play or to the characteristics of Euripidean tragedy in general but extends to, and engages directly, the generic interactions of *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae*, implicitly commenting on and, thereby, relativizing them.

8. This complexity accounts in large part for the revival of interest in the play, a revival dating from the discussion of Zeitlin 1981.

9. This statement has important implications. The relationship between Aristophanes and Euripides is usually treated as fixed, and, indeed, this chapter discusses key continuities between *Acharnians*, *Thesmophoriazusae*, and *Frogs*. I suggest, however, that more importance should be paid to the evolution of Euripidean tragedy as it appears in Aristophanes, i.e., to discontinuities that appear to exist alongside, and even to be partly congruent with, the evidence for continuity.

10. There was also a Euripidean *Auge*. For the testimonia and commentary, see Preiser 2000.61–63.

11. Olson 2002.liv–lxi summarizes the material; see Preiser 2000.41–63 for a detailed presentation.

12. Aristophanes' first two plays, *Banqueters* and *Babylonians*, apparently did not make use of Euripides' play, although the paucity of fragments makes it impossible to be sure. Certainly brief references like that of *Acharnians* 8 would be possible even if we can safely rule out large-scale engagement with the plays such as we see in Dikaiopolis' imposture scenes. See also Taillardat 1965.282–83.

13. Frag. 698 N2. The first line of the fragment, however, probably should not be taken directly from Aristophanes without emendation due to the violation of Porson's bridge (Olson 2002.189). See also Handley and Rea 1957.29 and Preiser 2000.259–65.

14. The phrase may be proverbial by the time of Plato *Gorgias* 521b, although Dodds (1990.368–69) is correct to say that reference to Euripides' play (or anyone's) cannot be established with certainty. Nevertheless, some of Dodds's counterevidence is open to doubt. The reference to someone as Μυσῶν ἔσχατος, "last of the Mysians," at Magnes frag. 5 K.-A. (cf. also Plato *Theaetetus* 209b8) may well suggest an allusion to Euripides' *Telephus*, if we interpret *Knights* 520–25 to mean that Magnes' career ended within the memory of Aristophanes. Nor does the epic resonance of the phrase (parodying the epic formula ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν, "best of the Achaians") make a literary provenance less likely. See also Olson 2002.187 and Preiser 2000.374–79.

15. Also 700a N2. = *Acharnians* 1188, 703 N2. = *Acharnians* 497, 708 N2. = *Acharnians* 540, 709 N2. = *Acharnians* 543, 710 N2. = *Acharnians* 555, 712 N2. = *Acharnians* 577, and 717 N2. = *Acharnians* 454.

16. Telephus's language in this scene also makes its way into *Acharnians*. Dikaiopolis' original offer is predicated upon the presumed expectation of the

chorus that he will not speak just things: κἄν γε μὴ λέγω δίκαια (317) echoes the words of Euripides 706 N2: δίκαια . . . ἀντειπεῖν ἔχων.

17. Pelling 2000.153 suggests on the basis of Euripides frag. 711 N2. that the Aspasia scene in *Acharnians* (524–27) may be linked to *Telephus*.

18. For the importance of the Telephus story throughout the play, see Foley 1988, Bowie 1993.27–32, and Dobrov 2001.33–53.

19. Cf. also Apollodorus 3.17–20, who does not record a reference to Dionysus's anger.

20. Some aspects of the story are common to the scholia, Apollodorus (both of which are thought to derive from the *Cypria*), and Euripides; for example, the curing of Telephus by the rust on Achilles' spear and the ragged costume of Telephus (only in Apollodorus and Euripides); see Gantz 1993.579. There has been some inclination to sharpen the focus of Aristophanes' presentation of *Telephus* by crediting Euripides with various plot innovations. Nevertheless, the rags of Telephus need not be original with Euripides for Aristophanes' jokes to be effective. At least two possibilities could account for Aristophanes' parody, even if the rags of Telephus were an early feature of the myth: 1) Euripides' use of the motif, which might well have been more extensive than that of his predecessors (cf. *Acharnians* 438–79), coupled with his emphasis on Telephus's rhetorical sophistication offered to Aristophanes the opportunity to provide a visual complement to the linguistic one; 2) Euripides' use of the rags motif for his *Telephus* may have differed little, if at all, from that of his predecessors, but his propensity for tragic heroes in compromised physical circumstances (e.g., 410–29) left him open to Aristophanes' grotesque exaggeration in *Acharnians* (e.g., 438–79).

21. Mette 1959, frags. 405–24; see also Gantz 1993.578–79 for relevant iconographical evidence.

22. It would, of course, have been prior to Euripides' *Telephus* (438), produced about seventeen years after the death of Aeschylus in 456/5. The question is not crucial for my general project, for which it is sufficient merely to establish the presence of several versions of Telephus available to Athenian audiences in 425. Euripides' version is probably, but not at all certainly, the latest. It would be interesting to know, however, how the treatments of Aeschylus and Sophocles compared, especially in regard to the wretchedness of Telephus (de rigueur for Euripides, but hinted at in Sophocles' *Mysoi* frag. 359 D). If it were highlighted in their versions as well, it would greatly affect our understanding of Aristophanes' attack on "Euripides" in *Acharnians*.

23. Radt 1977.343–44, for example, doubts the claim of the scholiast on *Acharnians* 332 that the hostage motif appeared in Aeschylus's *Mysoi*.

24. I do not suggest a resonance so direct (and polemical) as that between the recognition scene of *Libation Bearers* 166–211 and Euripides' *Electra* 520–37. Nevertheless, the contrast between these two passages suggests the potential intensity in the relationship between two tragic enactments of the same scene.

25. The existence of a Sophoclean *Telepheia* in trilogy form, based in an in-

scription from Aixione in Attica (*IG* II2 3091), has been long debated. See Pickard-Cambridge 1962.54–56, 81; Carden 1974.3; Sutton 1984.78–80; and Gantz 1993.579.

26. Relevant here is the ascription of P. Berol. 9908, originally assigned to Sophocles' *Syllogos Achaion*; see Pearson 1917.94–100. Handley and Rea 1957, however, show that the papyrus is likely a fragment of Euripides' *Telephus*. It is accepted as Euripidean by Preiser; see her description and discussion of the papyrus (Preiser 2000.483–97). For the anteriority of a supposedly "Aeschylean" *Telepheia*, see Sutton 1984.177–82.

27. Pollux's list of various props and costumes includes a reference to Telephus: ῥακία δὲ Φιλοκτήτου, στολὴ ἡ Τελέφου, which admits translation as either "rags for Philoctetes, a robe for Telephus" *or* "the rags of Philoctetes are the robe of Telephus" (4.117). The phrase is ambiguous, but perhaps testifies to a complex literary tradition: ῥακία were a hallmark of Euripides' character, according to *Acharnians* (415, 431, 432, 433, 438), although their use need not have begun with Aristophanes. At any rate, unless the στολή mentioned by Pollux is a simply form of ironic exaggeration, Pollux's words suggest the possibility, at least, of another, less ragged, tradition of depiction of Telephus.

28. The scholiast on the passage gives the full line: κακῶς ὀλοίατ' ἄξιον γὰρ Ἑλλάδι, "May he perish miserably—it is good for Greece" (720 N2).

29. This tactic, of course, is central to the dramatic action of *Thesmophoriazusae*, with the Relative's multiple impersonations of an Athenian matron, Telephus, Helen, and Andromeda. See also Slater 1993 and 2002, especially pp. 1–21.

30. Kaimio and Nykopp 1997 discuss the treatment Aristophanes gives to lesser writers, contrasting it with the abuse of respected writers like Euripides and Agathon.

31. In this context, see also Chapter 3.

32. *Acharnians* 11, 14, 16; cf. Kaimio and Nykopp 1997.

33. Compare the situation of *Thesmophoriazusae*, where the perceived need for an infusion of tragedy generates the three parodic rescue scenes.

34. προσαιτῶν, στωμύλος, δεινὸς λέγειν, "importunate, a chatterer, a clever speaker" (429).

35. For κομψός as associated with Euripides, see also *Thesmophoriazusae* 93, 460 and *Frogs* 967, with Dover 1993.313–14.

36. An allusion to the embassy of Gorgias to Athens in 427 has long been suspected. See Olson 2002.237 for ancient references and bibliography.

37. The point reappears covertly in *Knights*, produced in 424, a year after the chorus' boast about the educative powers of Aristophanic comedy. For discussion of the passage, see Chapter 4.

38. So construed, this also explains how Aristophanes sets up Euripides' work as a rehash of comic practice, since with the tragedian's claim to teach the Athenians to περινοεῖν ἅπαντα in *Frogs* (958), Aristophanes casts Euripides'

activity as having been anticipated by the pedagogical efforts of Aristophanes himself (summarized at *Acharnians* 634–40).

39. E.g., *Acharnians* 396–400, *Knights* 18, *Thesmophoriazusae* 5–21, and *Frogs* 98–102. For Euripidean parallels, see Olson 2002.177.

40. Cf. *Clouds* 1371–72 and 1377–78 for the catalytic effect of Euripides' presence.

41. The possibility that *Telephus* 706 N2. itself repackages a common rhetorical motif forces us to consider the latter possibility. ἐπίξηνος has certain prosaic associations, despite its appearance at Aeschylus *Agamemnon* 1277. It refers to the chopping block at which a butcher works and was never a means of execution (Fraenkel 1950.3.593). It thus also exemplifies Aristophanes' predilection for assimilating politics to the activities of everyday life (e.g., *Knights* 129–44, *Lysistrata* 567–85).

42. This denial is thematized in Bakhtin 1968, where the cyclical imagery of carnival time (consumption and growth, decay and death, rebirth) is emphasized. The substitution of kitchenware for armor expresses the idea well, as the deadly aspects of the cycle are eliminated in place of perpetual feasting.

43. Jouan 1989.24; see also his remarks (p. 26) on the comic debasement of treating the objects of daily life in tragic style.

44. It also provides an important link between the literary associations of *Acharnians* and its roots in the grotesque realism of carnival (Bakhtin 1968).

45. The instability of the comic audience is well discussed by Slater 1993.

46. Dobrov 2001.50–51: "The morphological trick [τρυγῳδία < τραγῳδία] suggests an 'imaginary' rivalry between genres in which comedy is both comparable to tragedy in prestige and function and superior, in as much as it appropriates and digests tragic material."

47. See Taplin 1983.331–33, Vaio 1971.340–41, and Olson 2002.200–01.

48. E.g., *Wasps* 650, *Frogs* 333. The initial part of the word comedy, deriving from κῶμος, "revel," suggests that *trygoidia* is constructed analogously. Cf. Aristotle *Poetics* 1448a for the derivation of comedy from κωμάζειν.

49. Pickard-Cambridge 1962.284 and Taplin 1983.333.

50. *Iliad* 24.505, 17.490; *Odyssey* 4.242; Hesiod *Works and Days* 718, etc.

51. Richards 1909.46–47. Such effects in Aristophanes are nevertheless highly transitory. I am grateful to the Johns Hopkins University Press reader for the observation that comedy's self-granted license to speak about justice leads the generic conflict back to politics.

52. μέλλω, ἔπειτα, as well as πόλις (499) do appear in tragedy. The fact that they are common prose words, however, suggests that the elevation they provide is limited. In the presence of poeticisms like τλῆναι, they no doubt help to sustain the tone. It seems unlikely, however, that they can do it on their own.

53. Cf. *Thesmophoriazusae* 1059, where this tactic is referred to as ἀντῳδὸς ἐπικοκκάστρια, "a mocking song of response"—a tag that could be used to describe Aristophanic comedy as a whole. There, as in this passage, it is associated

with rhetorical facility. Cf. ἐστωμυλάμην, *Acharnians* 578 vs. στωμυλλομένη, *Thesmophoriazusae* 1073. In *Acharnians*, these contemptuous repetitions of Euripides' *Telephus* are adumbrated by others. See, for example, Dikaiopolis' duet with Lamachos at 1097–1142 that contrasts their respective fortunes. See also Chapter 4 for a fuller discussion of this rhetorical strategy.

54. See Chapter 1 for vomiting as an act of carnivalistic transformation and renovation.

55. In so doing, he makes public the democratic predispositions he reveals elsewhere (19–42, 56–58, and passim).

56. πολίτης χηρηστός also appears to allude to the etymological significance of Dikaiopolis' name, as do lines 497–500 with their description of comedy "saying" (497) τὸ δίκαιον (500) about the city (499). This set of associations is, of course, enhanced if we accept the suggestion of Bowie 1988 that Dikaiopolis is a travesty of the name of Aristophanes' rival, Eupolis, whose name has a similar resonance. See also Eupolis frag. 248 K.-A. Dikaiopolis' right to speak becomes even stronger if we accept the suggestion of Slater 2002 that Aristophanes himself acted the part of Dikaiopolis.

57. Here, too, there appears to be a parallel with Euripides. Dikaiopolis is revealed to have been the citizen par excellence all along, just as Telephus was revealed to be a Greek.

58. See also Silk 1993 for the differences between the two plays.

59. *Knights* 813, 1240; *Clouds* 889, 920–24; *Peace* 528; *Frogs* 840–55, 1400.

60. For the play's concern with mimesis, see Sommerstein 1994.7.

61. Specifically, it seems superfluous, to judge from the similarity between Agathon's self-justification of his feminine attire and Dikaiopolis' interpretation of Euripides' daybed.

Thesmophoriazusae 149–50:
χρὴ γὰρ ποιητὴν ἄνδρα πρὸς τὰ δράματα,
ἃ δεῖ ποιεῖν πρὸς ταῦτα τοὺς τρόπους ἔχειν.

With regard to drama, a poetic man must have
The traits that he needs to produce.

Acharnians 412–13 (cf. also 410–11):
ἀταρ τί τὰ ῥάκι' ἐκ τραγῳδίας ἔχεις,
ἐσθῆτ' ἐλεινήν; οὐκ ἐτὸς πτωχοὺς ποιεῖς.

And why do you wear those rags from tragedy, a raiment pitious?
No wonder you create beggars (trans. Henderson 1998).

62. It does not appear to be the result of his low estimation of Agathon's abilities. See Kaimio and Nykopp 1997 for the treatment of Agathon, in contrast to the dismissive attitude with which Aristophanes treats the "bad poets." For the career of Agathon, see Sommerstein 1994.159.

63. Cf. his characterization of Euripides and Aeschylus at *Clouds* 1364–72.

64. This is precisely the effect of the carnivalized genres on epic consciousness. Epic mannerism, imperceptible on the tragic stage, is thrown into high relief when it is forced to share its platform with another, more opportunistic, genre; see Bakhtin 1980 and 1984.

65. This view has been affirmed most recently by Olson 2002.xxx–xxxi.

66. I take it as axiomatic that a dialogical relationship between *Acharnians* and *Thesmophoriazusae* exists, even if there is no explicit mention of the earlier play in *Thesmophoriazusae*—no more than *Clouds* 921–24 needs to mention Euripides for *his* version of the Telephus story to be brought into play. Further, if Euripides' play of 438 is still fair game by the time of *Thesmophoriazusae* (411), it is hard to see how *Acharnians* (424) will be less so.

67. Cf. 630–32. The Relative later describes them as ποτίσταται, "most inclined to drink" (735), and refers to Woman A's attachment to her child as indicative of the fact that she is φιλότεκνος . . . φύσει, "naturally fond of her children" (752).

68. We do not have good evidence for the precise circumstances under which Euripides dramatized the seizure of Orestes, but it probably occurred after the discovery of Telephus's true identity: Miller 1948.182, Handley and Rea 1957.36–37, and Preiser 2000.99–109.

69. Miller 1948.177. Miller's reading of *Thesmophoriazusae* for Telephean influence is careful and often persuasive. He is less successful when he adheres to a rigid set of expectations, assuming, for example, that, read correctly, the *Thesmophoriazusae* would reveal a sustained burlesque that replicates the structure of Euripides' play. Thus for him, the references to *Telephus* in the prologue to *Acharnians* show that the monologue of Dikaiopolis is modeled on the monologue of Telephus in the prologue of Euripides' play, which, at least in the case of the quotation at line 8 (= 720 N2), is clearly untrue.

For a different view less reliant on *Telephus*, see Zeitlin 1981, for whom the disguise motif is related to the play's focus on tragic mimesis. See also Taaffe 1994.94–95 and Bowie 1993.218–25.

70. Handley and Rea 1957.40. See also Preiser 2000.340–41 and Dobrov 2001.40.

71. Miller 1948.177–83 offers numerous examples.

72. Contrast the negotiations of Euripides himself at 1160–69.

73. I inevitably exclude numerous others, notably *Thesmophoriazusae* 134–36, a parody of Aeschylus's *Edonians* that seeks to cast the Relative as a Lycurgus figure; see also Bowie 1993.212–13. Bowie 1993.213–17 also documents the mythical subtext of the play, in which the rescue scene played by Euripides and the Relative is a perverse model of Demeter's descent to Hades and subsequent rescue of Persephone. For palimpsest as a critical term, see Genette 1997.

74. See Chapter 2 for a similar argument concerning the representation of the Cloud chorus.

75. *Iliad* 1.29. The pronominal use of the article in the *Thesmophoriazusae* passage, too, recollects epic usage.

76. As such, this orientation of *Thesmophoriazusae* exposes Euripides, the debunker of tragic stylization in such famous passages as *Electra* 514–36, with its pointed critique of the recognition scene in Aeschylus *Libation Bearers* 173–210, as no more successful ultimately than his predecessors at creating tragic action that could be imagined to have real-world effects. For Aristophanes' condescending treatment of the Aeschylus scene, see *Clouds* 534–36.

77. While I do not accept Miller's conclusions regarding all the passages cited, the likelihood seems strong that *Thesmophoriazusae* 76–77 is adapted from *Telephus*; Bakhuyzen 1877.112.

78. Although his primary thought is to exploit Agathon's effeminacy, his self-justification is based on more than just expediency. "You alone could speak worthily of me," he says (187). By referring to the need to have someone speak "worthily" (ἀξίως), Euripides' flattery of Agathon seems to predict the failure of the Relative's tragic impersonations.

79. κλάουσι παῖδες, πατέρα δ'οὐ κλάειν δοκεῖς; "Children weep, ought not fathers?" (1415)

80. σὺ δ' εὐπρόσωπος = γυναικόφωνος; λευκὸς = ἁπαλὸς; ἐξυρημένος = εὐπρεπὴς ἰδεῖν.

81. They are equally unheroic only on the surface, since Telephus's ruse is predicated on *seeming* a beggar. To disclose his true stature would be fatal for him. Admetus, by contrast, has no reason for a disguise.

82. Note also the anti-Telephean tonality of Agathon's response. Although its tragic style is probably a pastiche of Euripidean quotation (Rogers 1904.24), it emphasizes the undesirability of *technasmata*, "artifice." The term is redolent of Telephus's rhetorical fluency and success at self-disguise. It also appears in Euripides' *Orestes* 1560. In *Thesmophoriazusae*, the idea is frequently associated with Euripides. Besides the passage in question, see 94: τεχνάζειν (also of Euripides at *Frogs* 957). For the tragic provenance of the verb, see also Richards 1909.146. For the related term μηχανή, "device," see 87, 765, 927, 1132; also Euripides *Phoenissai* 890.

83. Pelling 2000.144 notes the unique character of *Telephus* in this respect, as opposed to the recent plays usually chosen for use. See also Harriot 1962 for an analysis of the demands typically made on the Aristophanic audience. Slater 2002.57 is no doubt correct to point to Dikaiopolis' elaborate lead-up to the *Telephus* parody as a tactic that would give the audience a chance to remember a play that they had forgotten.

84. Cf. *Acharnians* 411–13 for the circumlocution for πτωχοποιός. For plays other than *Telephus* that could perhaps be alluded to by Aeschylus's words, see *Acharnians* 418–31, although in view of what follows, it is clearly *Telephus* to which he is referring. Aeschylus's diction is likewise revealing. Note, for example, that one of the words that finally allows Euripides to guess correctly the

object of Dikaiopolis' visit is στωμύλος, 429 (cf. στωμυλιοσυλλεκτάδης, *Frogs* 841).

Conclusion

1. K.-A. Test. 7 (= Proem. de comoedia, p. 26 Koster).

2. Bakhtin 1984.108. Cf. Bakhtin 1984.195: "Someone else's words introduced into our own speech inevitably assume a new . . . interpretation and become subject to our evaluation of them; that is, they become double-voiced."

3. See Plato *Philebus* 48a8–50a10 for an analysis of the state of the soul in comedy. This model assumes that the audience views comic ridiculousness with a certain *schadenfreude* based on a presumption of superiority (they would *never* be seen doing such a thing!). Such a style of engagement on the part of the audience makes the self-presentation of Susarion and others a particularly effective position to assume rhetorically as an appeal to what are perceived as shared male attitudes. The spectators may not be as badly off as the proto-comic poet, but his experience is certainly comprehensible to them. His traditional misogyny, too, is an expression of this sort of appeal to the biases of the crowd, an unsurprising tactic (if crude by Aristophanic standards) at a gathering where the attitudes expressed are presented to an audience that is gendered as masculine, whatever its real composition at various historical periods.

4. Just as in the case of Tzetzes' anecdote, I do not wish to make a philological or an historical argument here. I do not attempt to guess at what went through poor Susarion's mind, whether he thought of himself as a critic of Hesiod, or even if he saw a clear link between what he was doing and what he heard Semonides had done. By adopting the rhetoric of complaint so popular in iambic poetry, he oriented the nascent genre of comedy as captious, dissatisfied, and critical in spirit, characteristics to which the moral-didactic tradition must be opposed, if it is to be of any value at all.

5. But see Pelling 2000 for an exemplary articulation of the problems of writing history with Aristophanes.

6. Bakhtin 1981.410. The fact that democrats come off worse in Aristophanes does not change this assessment. They are, after all, the faction in power and so better targets overall. That they are prominently mocked is no more surprising than the fact that political figures in power are much more frequently the targets of contemporary political comedians; such mockery is better evidence for Old Comedy's ruthless contemporizing than for its fundamentally conservative alignment.

7. Halliwell 1989 and Harvey and Wilkins 2000.

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